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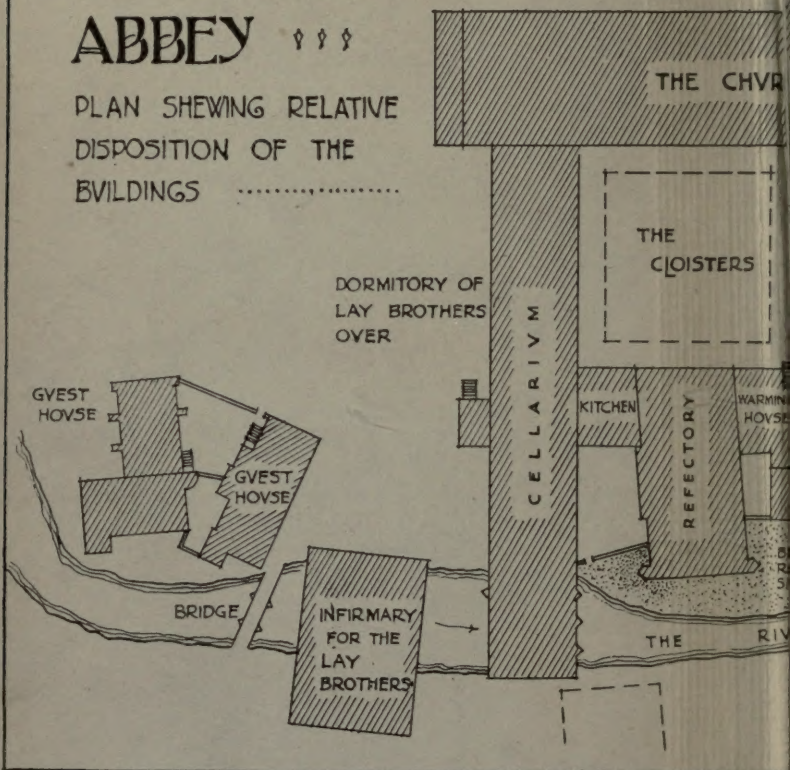


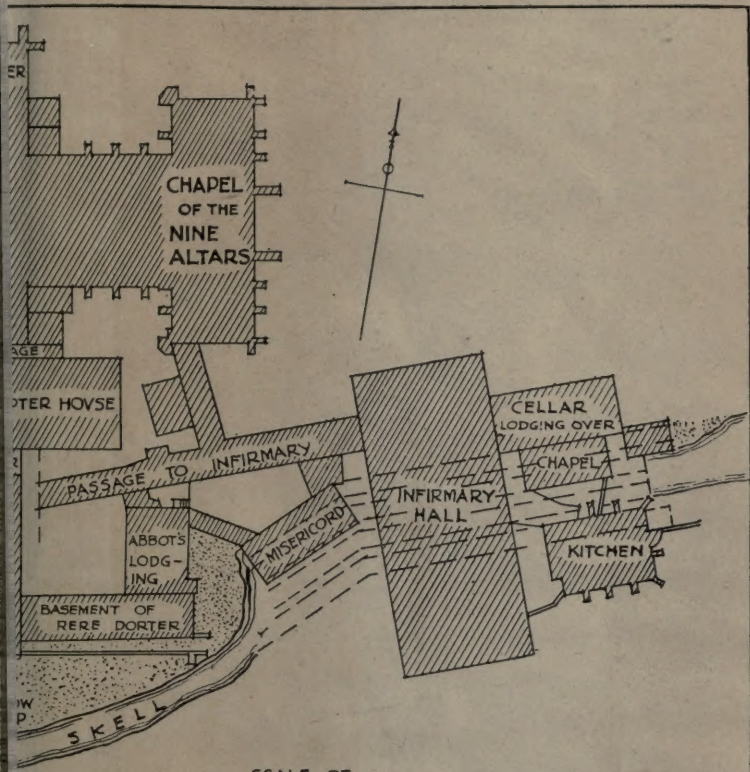
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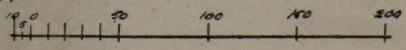
FOVNTAINS ABBEY

PLAN SHEWING RELATIVE
DISPOSITION OF THE
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SCALE OF FEET.



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THE RUINS OF FOUNTAINS ABBEY

BY THE

REV. A. W. OXFORD, M.A., M.D.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

BY

J. REGINALD TRUELOVE, A.R.I.B.A.

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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS little book is an attempt to put in simple language for the unlearned the results of the investigations of the ruins made by Mr. W. H. St. John Hope¹ and Mr. J. Arthur Reeve.² To make it easy to understand, architectural terms have been explained, Latin quotations translated, and a few facts given about the life and habits of the old Cistercian monks.³ Translations of Serlo's history of the abbey and of the chronicle of the abbots have been given in appendices.

I am much indebted to Mr. J. Reginald Truelove, not only for his drawings and photographs, but for much architectural information ; to Mr. Oswald H.

¹ *Fountains Abbey*, published in the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*.

² *A monograph on the Abbey of S. Mary of Fountains*, to be obtained from the author.

³ The references to the first series of *Consuetudines* or laws are by number, other references are to the pages of the *Nomasticon Cisterciense* (Solesmes, 1892) which contains the whole body of Cistercian law. The best introduction to the subject is in Guignard's *Les monuments primitifs de la Règle cistercienne* (Dijon, 1878) but the book is unfortunately out of print.

Wade for much ready help on different occasions and in divers ways; to Miss Margaret Barwise for assistance in the translations; to Mr. Wilfred Wainwright for photographs 6, 47, 89, 97, 98, and 100; and to Mr. John Lofthouse for much practical advice.

June, 1910.

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FOUNTAINS ABBEY

INTRODUCTION



HERE are a few things about Cistercian monks in general and Fountains Abbey in particular which it is well to briefly call to mind before studying the ruins.

The Cistercian Order, a branch of the Benedictine, was founded by St. Robert, Abbot of Molesme, who with twenty of his monks settled at Citeaux (*Cistercium*) near Dijon in 1098, and built there an abbey. The special interest of the order to Englishmen lies in the fact that its constitution is largely, if not mainly, due to an Englishman, the third

abbot of Citeaux, St. Stephen Harding, a native of Sherborne in Dorsetshire, who was appointed to the office in 1109. The object of the order was to restore the Benedictine system, which had become lax, to its original severity, and so strictly was the attempt made that no new members could be found to join, and the order was threatened with extinction when St. Bernard

brought his four brothers and about twenty other persons to the monastery and requested to be admitted as novices. From this time the order spread with great rapidity, and by 1150 there were more than three hundred monasteries attached to it.

The Benedictine monks were bound for life to the three obligations of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The Cistercians gave a very severe meaning to the vow of poverty. They described themselves as new soldiers of Christ, poor with the poor Christ—*novi milites Christi cum paupere Christo pauperes*¹—and lived up to their profession. They slept on straw in their habit, abstained not only from meat but even from cheese, eggs, fish, and milk, which were allowed to Benedictine monks. They emphasized the poverty by applying it to the church and its ornaments. Thus the architecture was of the utmost severity. There was to be no ostentatious tower; the low turret was to contain only two bells, one only to be rung at a time. No painted glass was admitted; the crosses were not of gold and silver, but of painted wood; the one candlestick was of iron; the censers of copper and iron. A new monastery had to be established in a remote district, far away from the habitations of men.

It is difficult to realize that the site of Fountains was ever anything but a pleasant place, but in the old chronicle it is described as 'thick set with thorns, lying between the slopes of mountains and among rocks jutting out on both sides; fit rather, it seemed, to be the lair of wild beasts than the home of human beings'.²

¹ *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, 63.

² See p. 165

It was this command to build monasteries in remote districts which made the Cistercian monks so famous for agriculture. They had to cultivate the soil or die of hunger, and thus became excellent farmers.

And it was from the remote position of the Cistercian monasteries that their ruins are far more extensive than those of other orders which were built in more populous places, and were more easily pulled down.

The constitution of St. Stephen was designed to prevent the Cistercian order from ever falling away from its original severity. Benedictine monasteries were self-governing, and there was no external authority, save that of the bishop of the diocese in which a monastery lay, to check any relaxations of the rule of St. Benedict. St. Stephen, following the earlier example of the Cluniac monks, made all the Cistercian monasteries members of one family. At its head was Citeaux, the abbot of which was called the father of the order (*pater universalis ordinis*), and next to it ranked the four first abbeys founded from it—La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, Morimond—called the four filiations.¹ Every year all abbots had to attend a general chapter at Citeaux, and every year each abbot had to pay a visit of inspection, personally or by deputy, to the abbeys which had sprung from his own. Citeaux itself was inspected by the abbots of the four filiations. In this way it was hoped that absolute uniformity would be preserved, and that no single monastery would be able to relax its rule.

¹ *Filia*, a daughter.

The chief duty of monks was to praise God by singing the prescribed services—*Opus Dei*, God's work¹—with the utmost regularity and strictness of ritual. Cistercians began the day at 2 a.m. by singing the two first offices, matins and lauds, with little or no interval. The others followed at 6 (prime), 9 (tierce), 12 (sext), 3 (nones), 6 (vespers), 7 (compline),² after which the monks went to bed. The common mass was said after tierce. No idleness was permitted. When the monks were not engaged in church they had to occupy themselves with study or work.

Meals varied with the season. But as a rule, breakfast, consisting of a little bread and wine, was given about 9; dinner, consisting of a pound of bread and two dishes of vegetables cooked without grease, was at midday; supper was between 6 and 7, and consisted of the remains of the pound of bread with some raw fruit or vegetables. For the winter half of the year dinner was at 3, and there was no supper except a drink of water. Supper was followed by a reading in the chapter-house, called the 'collation'³. During

¹ 'Let nothing be preferred to the work of God,' *Rule of St. Benedict*, cap. xliii.

² St. Benedict gives as an authority for these eight services, Ps. cxix. 164 and 62: 'Seven times a day do I praise Thee,' 'At midnight I will rise to give thanks to Thee.' The Romans began their day with sunrise, hence the names of some of the services. 'Compline' is equivalent to the word 'complete'.

³ *Collatio* is a conference. *Collation* may therefore be derived from the meeting of the monks or from the *Collations of Cassian*, which was one of the books recommended by St. Benedict in his *Rule*, cap. xlii. He forbade the early books of the Old Testament as too exciting for the monks at bed-time. The supper itself came to be called

the summer a nap was allowed after dinner, as the night sleep was shortened by vespers and compline being an hour later.

The Cistercian habit consisted of a tunic of wool and over it an ampler garment of the same stuff which ended above in a hood to cover the head. When the monks were at work, the latter was replaced by a scapular,¹ a garment with a hood but without sleeves. The original colour of the habit was dark brown, but St. Alberic, the second abbot of Citeaux, changed it to white, with the exception of the scapular, which remained dark. The tradition was that the change of colour was owing to a vision in which St. Alberic saw the Blessed Virgin putting on his shoulders the white garment. The more probable reason is that the change was in accordance with the general Cistercian simplicity. Dark garments had to be dyed, the white was really nothing but the natural grey of the wool.

At first few monks were priests, but in time the majority must have become so, for everywhere the abbeys were enlarged in order to furnish more altars on which those monks who were priests might say their daily mass. At the dissolution of Fountains all the monks were priests.

In addition to the monks proper (*monachi literati*, monks who could read) there were lay-brothers (*fratres conversi*, converted brothers), who were unable to read, and were therefore unable to sing the daily offices, and had in their place to repeat certain prayers, &c., which they learned by collation, and the term was afterwards used for any light meal.

¹ *Scapulae*, shoulder-blades.

heart.¹ They were bound by exactly the same vows as the others, but were employed in tailoring, shoemaking, and other trades, and in doing the work of the outlying farms where they often lived, while the monks proper kept within the precincts of the monastery. Some of the lay-brothers might have been of good family, as education was not common; others were doubtless mere outcasts who sought refuge from starvation. The former class were diminished by the spread of learning, the latter by the Black Death of 1349, which swept away half the population of England, and thus made every man's work of value. Soon after this pestilence the lay-brothers practically ceased to exist, and their place was taken by hired labourers.

Of Fountains itself little need be said here, as the early history is given in the Appendix. The abbey was founded in 1132 and suppressed in 1539. The buildings therefore cover a period of 400 years. One event, however, must be mentioned and carefully remembered. In 1147, only twelve years after its foundation, the monastery, with the exception of the church, was almost destroyed by fire. This was done by the friends of William, Archbishop of York, who were enraged at the opposition which Henry Murdac, the abbot of Fountains, made to his appointment. The monastery was at once rebuilt, but traces of the old

¹ The Lord's Prayer, the Creed, Psalm li, and the Ave Maria. A lay-brother could never become a monk proper; it was forbidden to teach him to read (*Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 352). This rule was established, not in the interests of class distinction, but to prevent the feeling of discontent which was utterly foreign to the monastic spirit.

building are still evident, and it is not possible to understand some of the features of the ruins without bearing in mind this fire and the alterations which it entailed.

PLAN OF THE CHVRCH

NORMAN — before fire of 1147
 " — immediately after fire
 13TH CENTURY
 14TH
 15TH
 15TH

*(Note: Sanctuaries 1179-1180)
 (Monasteries 1180-1181)*

- A CHAPELS
- B GOOD ALTAR
- C CHAPEL of *Emmanuel*
- D SACRISTY
- E TOMB OF ABBOT SWINTON ?
- F GRADVS PRESBYTERII

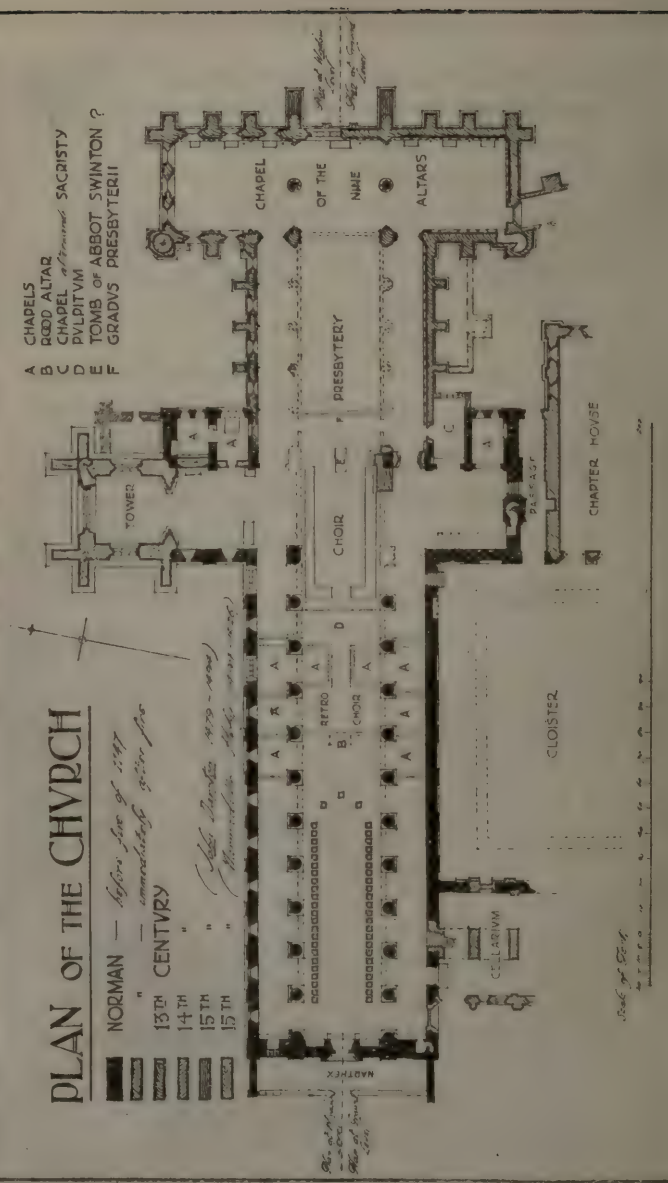


FIG. 2.

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH—ORATORIUM



THE Church, or, as it was generally called, the Oratorium,¹ was the centre of monastic life. A Cistercian church was always dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and was always in the form of a cross, the earliest examples having a short eastern arm with a square end, and a long western arm. The only tower permitted was a low one over the crossing of the arms.

Now if you take your stand at the crossing of the arms with your face to the east you see at once that this church differs in two respects from the early type.

1. It has a lofty tower to the north, such tower being strictly forbidden by the laws of the Cistercian order. But this is not an original part of the church which was built in 1135; it was put up more than 350 years later by Marmaduke Huby,²

¹ From *orare*, to pray.

² Huby's work can be always recognized, as he used a limestone which was probably obtained from the hills to the east of the abbey. His predecessors used the grit from the neighbourhood.

who was abbot¹ from 1494 to 1526. The original tower was a low one, which would have been just over your head as you stand at the crossing, and of which only the north-west and south-east piers² remain.

Whether badly built at first or, as is more probable, unwisely raised in height at a later period, this tower began to give way. To keep it up, Darnton, abbot from 1479 to 1494, had to prop the south-east pier with the large buttress³ of four stages⁴ which stands on your right.

He also rebuilt the masonry of the pier which carried the eastern arch of the crossing from below the string-course,⁵ and added the moulded plinth.⁶

If you look round this buttress to the arch beyond, you see that another support was rendered necessary. The arch has been built up and another inserted beneath it (Fig. 3). This was done by Huby, who made the moulding⁷ over the inserted arch terminate in two angels carrying shields. The shield on the left has his initials, MH, and a mitre⁸

¹ Abbot means father, and was the title used from the earliest times by the head of a monastery. The word *abbey* is derived from it.

² Pier is here used for a large column. It is also used for the solid mass of masonry between two windows.

³ Buttress is a structure of stone built against a wall to support it. It is from the French word, *bouter*, to push or bear against.

⁴ On the top of it are a lion and two other beasts.

⁵ String-course is a projecting horizontal band.

⁶ Plinth, from the Greek word *plinthos*, a brick, is the projecting base of a column or wall.

⁷ Moulding is an ornamental variety of outline given to the subordinate parts of buildings.

⁸ Mitre, from the Greek word *mitra*, a head band, is the arch-shaped cap worn by all bishops and by the abbots

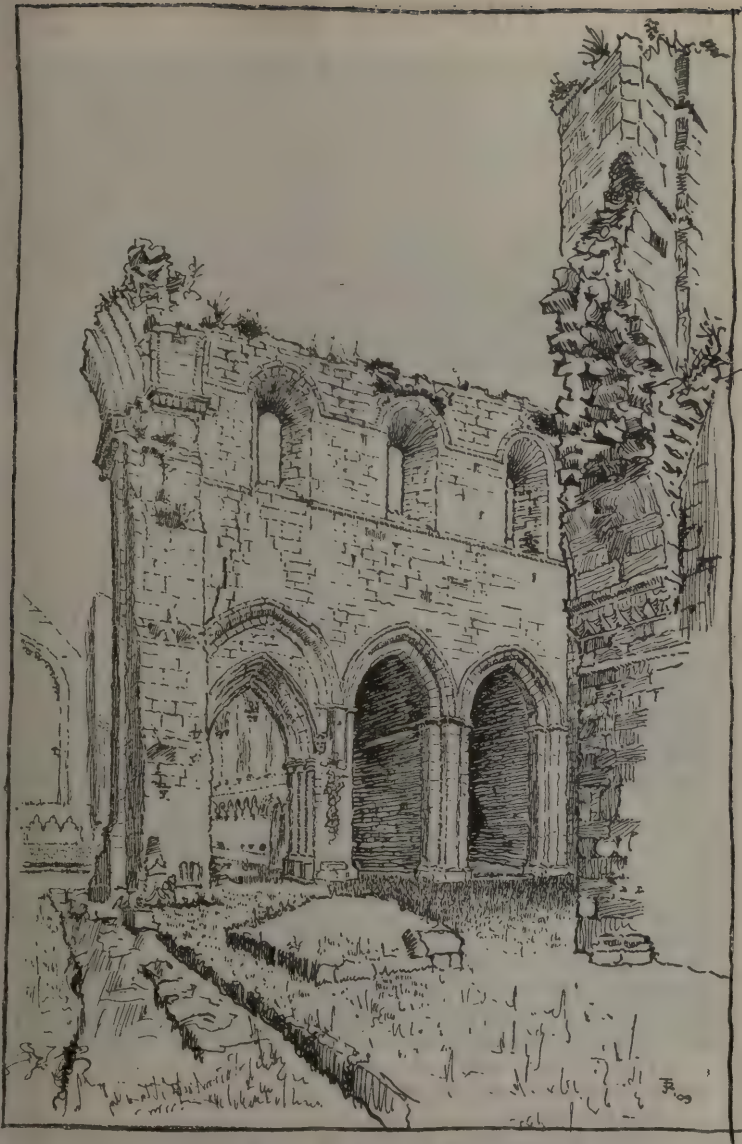


FIG. 3. EAST WALL OF SOUTH TRANSEPT.

and crosier¹; the one on the right, three horse-shoes, which perhaps formed his coat of arms.² Over the arch a large crack running up to the window above has been filled with long binding-stones.

2. Returning to your original position, you will see the second point of difference from the early type of church—the eastern arm is not short. This part of the church is called the presbytery, being the place occupied by the presbyters,³ that is, priests. But originally the eastern arm was short. If you go forward, you will see a double line of stones in the turf which mark the outside wall of the original presbytery (cf. Figs. 4 and 5). The present enlarged presbytery was begun by John of York, abbot from 1203 to 1211, continued by John of Ely, abbot from 1211 to 1219, and completed by John of Kent, abbot from 1220 to 1247.

Again returning to your old place, you can see in front of you a large stone on which has been a brass representing an abbot with a crosier in his hand. As the mitre is over but not on his head, Mr. Hope has suggested that it is the tomb of an abbot who resigned office, perhaps of Thomas Swinton, who was elected in 1471 and resigned in 1478.

of some monasteries by special grant from the Pope. It is not known when the privilege was given to the abbot of Fountains, but the mitre was certainly worn by Darnton and Huby. Mitred abbots sat in the House of Lords.

¹ The staff or crook of a bishop or abbot. It is from the French word *crocher*, to hook.

² See pp. 21–3.

³ Priest is a contracted form of the Greek word *presbyteros*, which means elder.



FIG. 6. PITS BENEATH CHOIR STALLS.

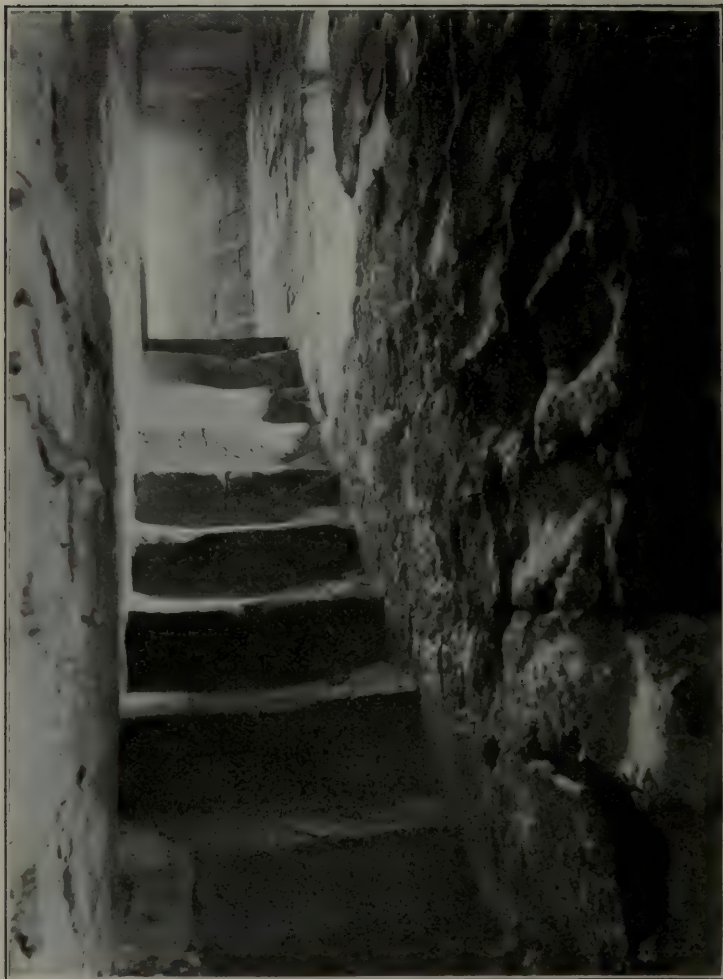


FIG. 8. BRANCH PASSAGE LEADING UP TO ROOM OVER
SOUTH TRANSEPT CHAPELS.

You will notice that you stand between two pits. These mark the choir-stalls in which the monks sat. In the north side of the pits you can see the remains of earthenware pots which were placed beneath the stalls for acoustic purposes (Fig. 6). There seem to have been twenty-three stalls on

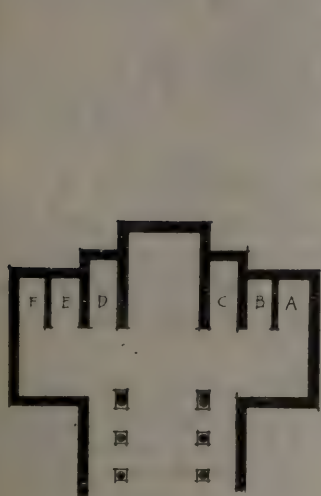


FIG. 4.
ORIGINAL PRESBYTERY.

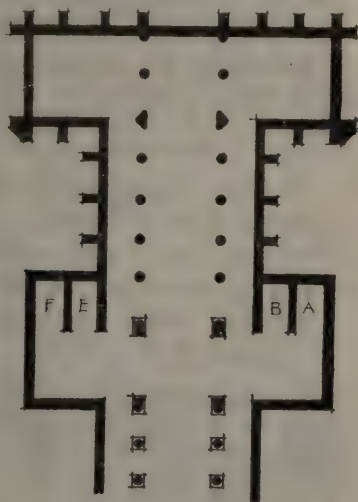


FIG. 5.
LATER PRESBYTERY.

each side, twenty down the the middle of the church and three facing east.¹ At the east end of the south pit you can see where the plinth has been cut away to allow the monks easy access to their stalls.

Looking to the right to the far wall of the south arm of the cross, that is, of the south transept, you see an opening some 8 feet from the ground

¹ This was Huby's arrangement. There may have been two rows on each side in the earlier days when the monks were more numerous.

(Fig. 7). This was the entrance into the church from the monks' dormitory¹ or sleeping chamber. The staircase to it was very gradual, as is seen by the platform and the line of the plaster on the wall. This entrance from the dormitory straight into the church was very necessary, seeing that the monks, as we saw before,² had to come down at 2 a.m. to sing their first service.

Before the fire of 1147 the dormitory was on a lower level, and the entrance to the church was of course lower. Part of the built-up original opening can be seen just to the left of the present entrance.

Next to the entrance from the dormitory is the opening into a circular staircase which runs to the roof. Some way up the staircase is a passage (Fig. 8) branching off to the east and ending in a flight of stairs which leads to a room built over the transept chapels.³

Nothing remains of this except the westernmost window in the south wall, which can be seen in Fig. 60 (this shows also a loop⁴ in the passage), and the lower courses of the east wall, which was built between and above the gables of the chapels (Fig. 45).

To the east of the staircase is a doorway opening into the old sacristy or vestry.⁵

There is an indication in the wall that this entrance has been lowered.

¹ From the Latin word *dormire*, to sleep. The old English form of the word was *dorter*.

² Page 4.

³ A similar room existed at Kirkstall, where the passage to it is a gallery in the wall.

⁴ An opening in a wall to look through.

⁵ Sacristy is where the *sacred* things were kept, vestry where the *vestments* were put. The words are used indiscriminately for the same room.

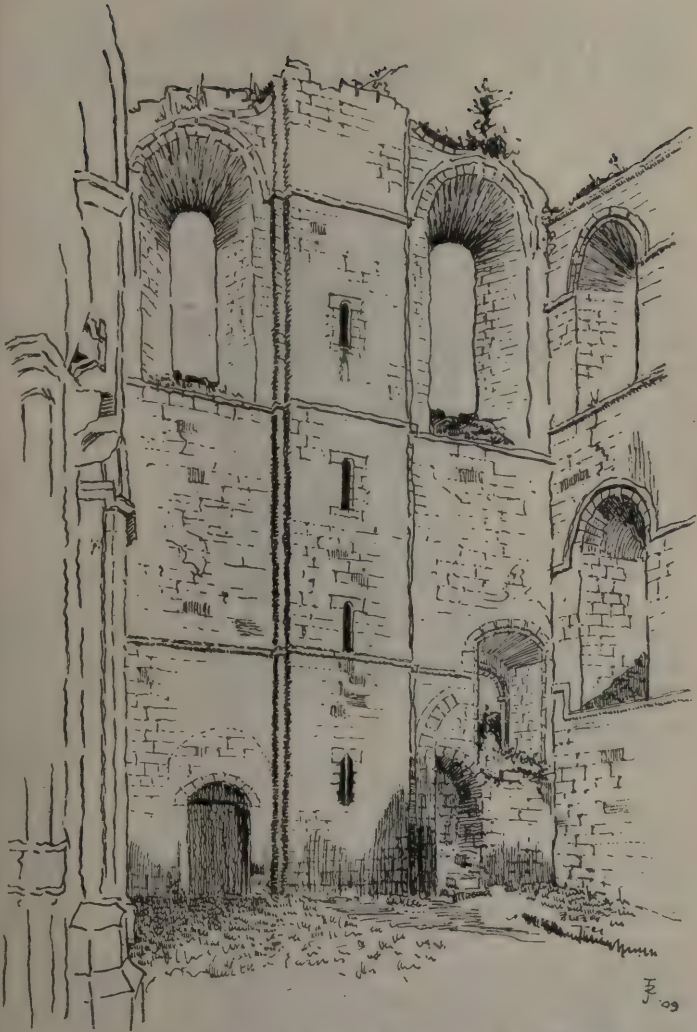


FIG. 7. SOUTH END OF SOUTH TRANSEPT.

On the east side of this south transept are three arches (Fig. 3), which led originally to three chapels (Figs. 4 and 5), separated by solid walls, which had



FIG. 9. SOUTH TRANSEPT CHAPEL, CONVERTED BY ABBOT DARTON INTO A SACRISTY

pointed barrel roofs¹ and were lighted by two round-headed windows with a circular one above (Fig. 45).

¹ The arch of these was concentric with the arch between chapel and transept.

1. The southernmost chapel has in the south wall a drain with side recesses and a niche above to take the cruets for wine and water. The roof, which had fallen, has been carefully reset.

2. The middle chapel (Fig. 9) was lengthened during the fifteenth century by inserting an archway in the east wall, leaving the old circular window above it. A large perpendicular window was put in the new east wall and a doorway inserted into the presbytery. This was doubtless to convert the chapel into a vestry. At a later date Abbot Huby inserted another door with a window over it in the east end of the south wall, in order to give access to a room which he built outside (Fig. 45).

3. The northern chapel was removed entirely when the presbytery was enlarged. A peculiarity is that this and the corresponding one on the other side were longer than the others (Fig. 4, c and d).¹ The arch above it has been already described. The pier between this arch and the middle one has been cut away for the insertion of an image, perhaps that of St. Christopher, 'the sight of whom in early morning was supposed to insure beholders from sudden death that day.'²

In the south transept was the clock, looked after by the sacristan,³ who set its alarum every

¹ Mr. Hope suggests that this was to give an upper entrance (p. 37) to the original presbytery.

² Hope's *Kirkstall Abbey*, p. 13.

³ The official who looked after the sacred vessels and vestments. His varied duties are set forth in the *Consuetudines*, cxv. Amongst others he had to prepare the altar bread with great solemnity, and to look after the candles and lamps of the entire establishment. See Gasquet's *English Monastic Life*, p. 66.

night. He slept near the church, perhaps in the lobby at the top of the stairs,¹ where he could guard the treasures of the abbey² as well as be ready to wake the brethren. As soon as the clock woke him, he trimmed the two lamps in the church and dormitory, which were always burning, and rang the great bell for the night service.

Turn now to the north transept. Here also were three eastern chapels (Figs. 4 and 5).



FIG. 10. DRAIN IN NORTH TRANSEPT.

1. The southernmost was removed owing to the enlargement of the presbytery. The arch above it has completely perished.

2. The arch of the middle chapel was blocked by Huby,³ who left only a small doorway as entrance. If you look inside you can see the drain in the south wall (Fig. 10), the base of the altar, and a doorway made by Huby into the next

¹ Page 84.

² Page 84.

³ To strengthen his tower.



FIG. 11. CHAPEL OF ST. MICHAEL ARCHANGEL.

chapel. Over the doorway in the transept wall is a bracket for an image, and the inscription

Altare fci michaelis arch

that is, the altar of Saint Michael archangel (Fig. 11).

3. The entrance to the northern chapel was completely blocked by Huby,¹ who brought out the altar and placed it against the wall. High up above it is an inscription beginning

Altare pro

The chapel itself is quite perfect.

The old central tower above the crossing has disappeared. It was probably left, even after the new tower was built, and fell when the buildings decayed, completely crushing the arcades of the presbytery. Just enough is left to show that the space beneath it was vaulted in stone.

Look now at Huby's great tower. It is nearly 170 feet high, and is divided into four stages. The staircase up it starts in the north-east corner and goes to the second story. The continuation to the top is in the north-west corner. It is an impressive building, but suffers from an attempt to imitate the mouldings of an earlier period.²

Looking up, you see just below the parapet a band containing an inscription, and in the second story a second band of inscription; both these are continued round the tower. The east, west, and north sides have, in addition, a band in the third story.

The inscriptions are passages from the Cistercian

¹ To strengthen his tower.

² Huby did this more successfully with the arch which he inserted in the northernmost chapel of the south transept.

Breviary, and with one exception are taken from the Bible.

(*Look at the south side now ; you will be reminded to look at the other sides when you are outside the church.*)

(I) The upper band.

The inscriptions here begin and end behind the pinnacles, and are therefore longer than the others.

(a) South side (Fig. 12).

Only a few letters can be deciphered.

(b) East side (Fig. 13).

Sit nomen dom ihu xpi benedictum . . . (a long leaf)

The missing words are 'ex hoc nunc et usque in secula', and the translation would be 'Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus Christ from this time forth for evermore,' an adaptation of Psalm cxiii. 2, used at vespers.

(c) North side (Fig. 14).

This seems to be in abbreviated form, as suggested by Mr. Hope,

*In nomine Iesu Christi omne genu flectatur
celestium terrestrium et infernorum.*

That is, 'That at the name of Jesus (Christ) every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.' (Phil. ii. 10).

(d) West side (Fig. 15).

*Benedicamus prm & fil cū sco spū laudem et sup
exaltem eum in secula* (a four-petalled flower).

'Let us bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit ; let us praise Him and exalt Him for ever.' From vespers.

(II) The middle band.

(a) The west and south sides (Figs. 15 and 12) form a continuous inscription.



FIG. 12. INSCRIPTIONS ON SOUTH SIDE OF TOWER.



FIG. 13. TOP AND MIDDLE INSCRIPTIONS ON EAST SIDE.



FIG. 14. TOP AND MIDDLE INSCRIPTIONS ON NORTH SIDE.

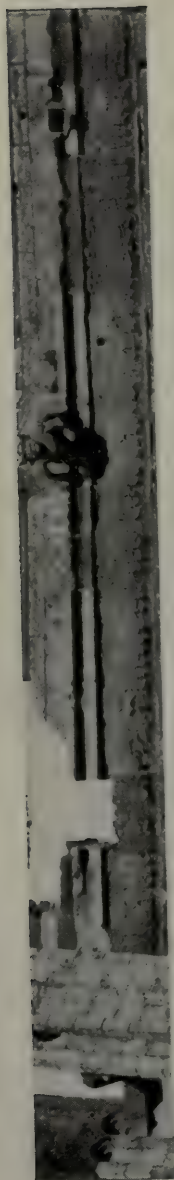


FIG. 15. TOP AND MIDDLE INSCRIPTIONS ON WEST SIDE.

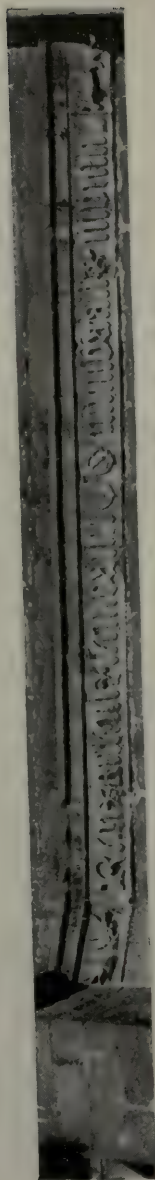


FIG. 16. BOTTOM INSCRIPTION ON WEST SIDE.

(Leaf on turret stair) *Regi* (leaf) *autem* (leaf) *seculorum* (1) (2) *immortali* (sprig) *invisibili* (long leaf) *Soli* (leaf) *deo* (leaf) *honor* (flower) *et* (leaf) *gloria* (1) *in* (2) *secula* (leaf) *seculorum* (leaf) *a* (leaf) *men* (blank space with a flower at end).

‘Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.’ (1 Tim. i. 17.)

(b) The east and north sides also run on together (Figs. 13 and 14).

(Two leaves) *Benediccioni* *et* (leaf) *claritas* *et* (leaf) *sapientia* (1) *et* (2) *graciarum* *accio* *honor* *Et* *virtus* *et* *fortitudo* *de* *nostro* (1) *in* (2) *secula* *seculorum* *amen* (a four-petalled flower) (long leaf on turret stair).

‘Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.’ (Rev. vii. 12.)

(III) The lower band.

(a) East side.

(Leaf) *Soli* (leaf) *de* (flower) *ihu* (leaf) *xpo* (leaf) *honor* (3) (1) (leaf) *et* (leaf) *gloria* (leaf) *in* *scla* (flower) *scla*.

(b) North side.

(Grapes and vine leaves) *Soli* *de* *ihu* *xpo* *honor* (leaf) *et* (flower) *glia* (flower) *in* (flower) *scla* (leaf) *sclor* (blank shield) *ame*.

(c) West side (Fig. 16).

Soli (leaf) *de* (flower) *ihu* (leaf) *xpo* (flower) *honor* (flower) *et* (3) *glia* (1) *in* *scla* (leaf) *sclor*,

‘To the only God Jesus Christ be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.’ A slight variation from the middle band on the south side.

The numerals in the inscriptions stand for the following shields (Fig. 17) :

1. Three horseshoes.

This is thought by Mr. Hope to be Huby's own coat of arms, as it is not found before his time, and is used more than once with the initials MH. But Thomas Tonge, Norroy King of Arms, in his Visitation of Yorkshire in 1530,

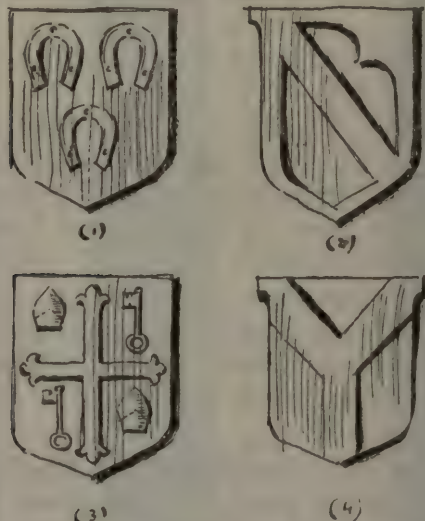


FIG. 17. COATS OF ARMS ON THE TOWER.

only four years after Huby's death, represents the three horseshoes as the arms of the abbey—'Arms: Azure, three horse-shoes or.'¹ I have a Cistercian Breviary of

¹ That is, a blue shield with three horseshoes in gold on it. Tonge also mentions that Henry, the second Lord Percy, a great benefactor to the abbey, was buried in the middle of the choir before the high altar, and that the Lord Mowbray, a great benefactor, was also buried in the choir. This was probably the great Roger de Mowbray, who died about 1188, though one tradition gives his burial-place as Byland Abbey, which he had founded. His effigy (Fig. 47) was moved to the transept chapel next to

Huby's time, which has been illuminated with four shields. Two are the royal arms of France and England; the other two bear an abbot's crosier. One of these, azure, has on it in gold a mitre and crosier, the initials MH, and the words 'Soli Deo honor et gloria', which are found four times on Huby's tower; the other, a bend counter-compony,¹ surmounted by a crosier, which were perhaps Huby's own arms.

2. A maunch surmounted by a bend.²

This is the description given by Mr. Walbran, who is believed to have examined the shields from a scaffold.³ It is the shield, therefore, of Norton⁴ of Norton Conyers and Sawley, which is still borne by Lord Grantley, the present representative of the Norton family. Heraldic authorities state that the maunch is depicted in many different ways. The shield, as given by a telephoto lens, certainly differs from that now used by Lord Grantley.

3. A cross fleury⁵ with a mitre in the first and fourth quarters and a key erect in the second and third.

The shields in the east and west sides are slightly different. The one given in Fig. 17 is from the west side.

4. A pall cross.

This occurs only once in the top inscription on the east side, just to the right of the gap. It is said to form the ancient arms of the Archbishop of York.⁶

the tower early in the last century, and to the museum in 1858. The Lord Percy was the *first* Baron Percy of Alnwick, who died in 1315.

¹ That is, a bar composed of two rows of small squares.

² That is, a sleeve with a bar across it. A maunch is a long hanging lady's sleeve worn in the time of Henry I.

³ Mr. Gordon M. Hills in *Collectanea, Archaeologia*, vol. ii, p. 297.

⁴ Sir John Norton died in 1520. His daughter Joan married Sir William Mallory of Studley.

⁵ Terminating in a *fleur de lis*, that is, the lily of the royal arms of the French kings.

⁶ Woodward and Burnett, 375.



Fig

FIG. 18. NICHE ON EAST SIDE OF TOWER.

Still looking up, you see over the lowest window a niche with the image of an abbot.¹ When, later on, you look at the tower from outside the church you will see above the lowest window on the east side an empty niche, and above it an angel holding a shield with three horseshoes on it (Fig. 18). On the west side is a similar shield with a mitre and crosier between the letters MH (Fig. 26). On the north side there is the image of St. Catherine, the patroness of learning (Fig. 19), over the lowest window, and over the next above a mitred figure with a crosier which Mr. Walbran thought was Thomas Savage, Archbishop of York, but Mr. Hope says is St. James the Great.²

St. Catherine gained her renown as patroness of learning by her precocious knowledge of philosophy, and by converting fifty heathen sages sent by the emperor to convert her. She is always figured in the costume of a queen, and generally is represented with the toothed wheel on which her enemies vainly tried to torture her, and the sword by which she was finally executed in the year 307. Here she is represented with the martyr's palm and a book, the emblem of her learning. The old masters were fond of painting the vision in which she was taken to heaven and betrothed to Christ.

On the east side of the tower are the remains of a building which was an addition made in the fourteenth century to the end of the north transept, and was destroyed when the tower was built. It had a vaulted roof and was of two stories. It may have been a room for copyists with a library above, as a similar room seems to have existed in some monasteries in this position.

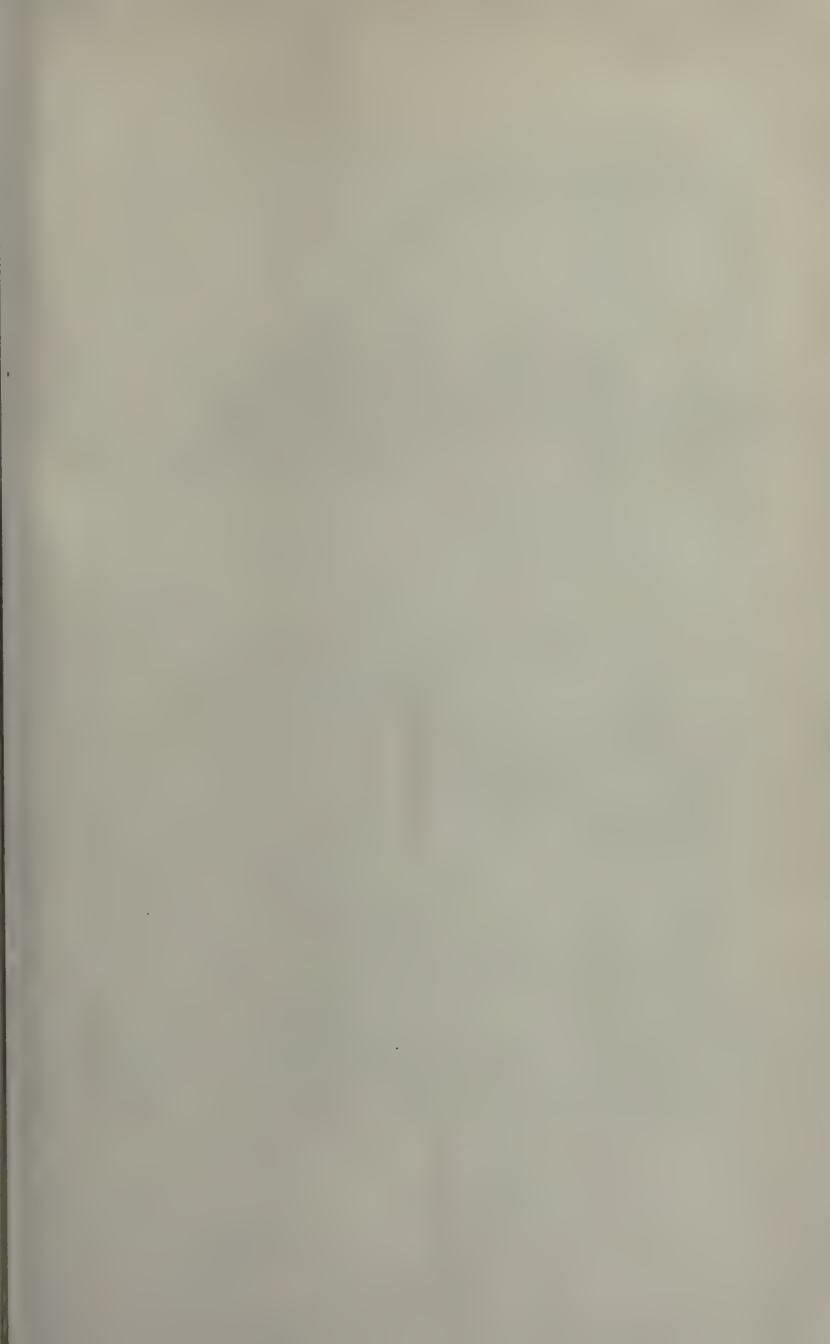
¹ As there is no mitre, Mr. Hope thinks it may represent St. Bernard.

² See p. 41.



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FIG. 19. NICHE ON NORTH SIDE OF TOWER.



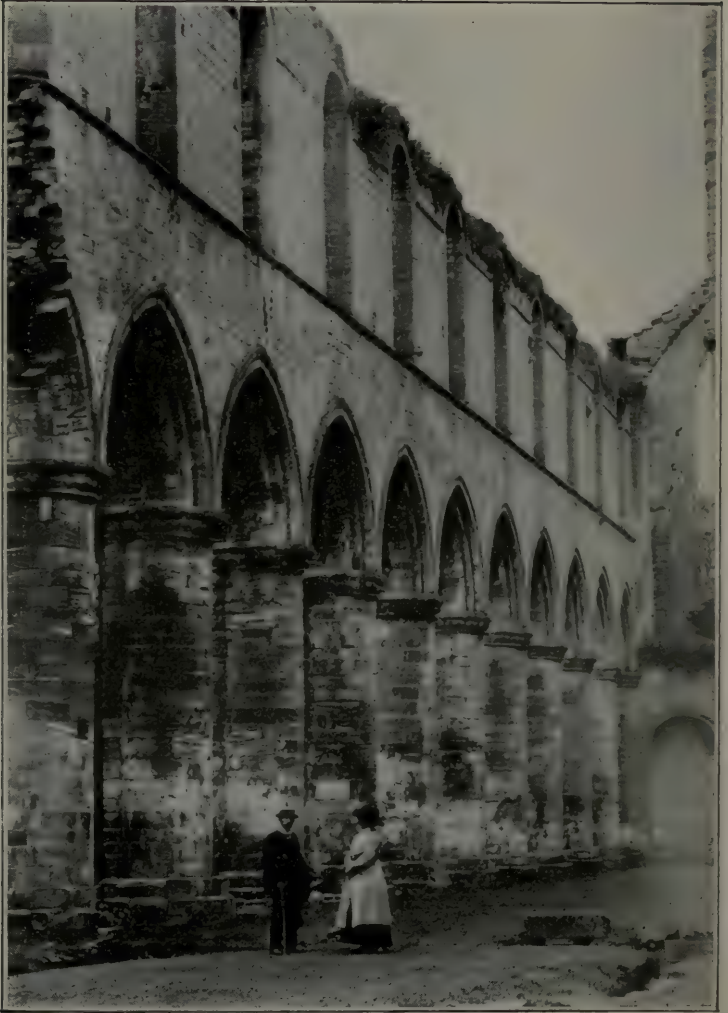


FIG. 95. THE NAVE.

From your original position at the crossing now look towards the long western arm of the church, the nave,¹ which is 194 feet long. It is in eleven bays² and is divided from the aisles³ on each side by two rows of ten massive pillars with square bases (Figs. 20 and 95).

As in all Cistercian churches, these pillars were joined together by stone walls,⁴ 23 inches thick, against which stood the stalls of the lay-brothers, who entered the church beyond the last pillar on the south side, where there was no wall. The aisles themselves were merely used as passage-ways.⁵

As you look down the nave you have a clear

¹ From the Latin *navis*, a ship, perhaps because the Church of Christ was often likened to a ship tossed by the waves, but more probably from the shape. The word is sometimes used for the corresponding part of a secular building.

² Bay, a compartment of a building marked by columns, buttresses, or in some other way.

³ The wings (*ala* is the Latin for wing) or lateral divisions of a building, usually divided by a row of columns from the nave.

⁴ These walls were 'provided for from the first, for the base-moulds are only complete on the aisle side, and are stopped off where they would have been covered by the wall'. Hope's *Fountains Abbey*, p. 35. It was Mr. Hope who first discovered the use of the nave in Cistercian churches. See his paper, p. 42.

⁵ Mr. John Wilson, in his paper on Kirkstall Abbey, points out that 'Romanesque builders frequently divided the total internal width of their churches into four equal parts, giving two to the nave and one to each of the aisles, the lines of division fixing the centre lines of the arcade piers. At Kirkstall, as at Fountains and many other Cistercian churches, the aisles are narrower in proportion to the central space, and the bays of the aisles are decidedly oblong from east to west. Probably the reason was the severely practical one—as the aisles were merely passages, they needed only to be narrow' (p. 111).

view to the west end of the church. This was not so before the ruin of the abbey. If you pass to the west between the two pits where the choir-stalls once stood, you come on the foundations of a wall¹ between the first pair of pillars. On the second pair of pillars you see deep cuts which mark the position of another transverse wall. These two walls supported a gallery (*pulpitum*), from which the epistle and gospel were sung on festivals, and on which, at the north end, stood an organ. There was a doorway in the centre (*introitus inferior*, lower entrance) to the presbytery, and on each side of the door were two altars dedicated to St. Mary and St. Bernard.

We know this from the record of the burial-place of Thomas Paslew, abbot from 1434-5 to 1442. See p. 244. John Martyn, who succeeded Paslew but died seven weeks later, was buried to the west, and John Ripon, abbot from 1414 to 1434-5, still further west. See pp. 243-4.

Across the nave, at the fourth row of pillars, you see more notches and holes, which mark the position of the rood-screen. Against the centre would be the rood-altar, and above it the rood,² that is, the great cross. There would be a doorway on each side of the altar.³

¹ This and the masonry of the stalls are of the limestone used by Huby, who must therefore have reconstructed this part of the church.

² It is the same word as rod.

³ With regard to these screens, Messrs. Bond and Camm say in *Roodscreens and Roodlofts*, vol. i, pp. 79, 80: 'The apparent complexity becomes clear if we regard these large monastic churches, which possessed a fully-developed nave and choir, and double system of screen-work, as being in reality nothing more nor less than two churches placed end to end, the rood-screen being a reredos and its wooden enclosure the sanctuary of the outer church, whether

Between the pulpitum and the rood-screen was the retrochoir, in which the monks sat who were too infirm to take their proper place in the choir-stalls. The fourth pair of pillars are cut away on their east side for seats.

Against the walls between the pillars of the nave were the stalls of the lay-brothers. When these ceased to exist, the walls were removed and chapels were screened off in the aisles and altars erected against some of the pillars.

These are marked in the plan. Other things, not marked but easily seen, are drains in the third and fourth bays of the north wall, a bracket for an image against the sixth south pillar, and another against the seventh north pillar.

The bases of the third, fourth, and fifth pillars on the north side, and of the third and fifth on the south side, have been cut down. It looks as if stalls had been against them. But stalls could not well have stood in this position after the rood-screen had been erected.

The nave, after the removal of the walls between the pillars, would be used only for processions. Beneath the turf are two rows of twenty-three slabs of Huby's limestone (Fig. 2), each 27 inches square, with an incised circle; three others are to the east of these, and Mr. Walbran, in his account of the excavations of 1854, described another in the west. The stones were doubtless for the ordering of processions.

If you look at the windows, you see that six in the south aisle and two in the north aisle have been converted into fifteenth-century windows.

Note in the wall of the north aisle a wide blocked doorway between the fifth and sixth pillars. This

the same were for parochial use, or as in such cases as Fountains, for the lay-brethren, husbandmen, and others attached to the monastery, with sojourners and pilgrims.'

was the entrance by which carts brought in materials during the building of the church.

Small plain square tiles covered the whole nave.

In trying to picture what the church looked like in old days you must remember that its walls and the walls of all the monastic buildings were covered with a coating of hard lime, upon which were painted joint lines in white, the lines not necessarily following the courses of stone beneath. This can be well seen in the west wall of the south transept. In some parts of the buildings, as for example just outside the east door of the parlour, the lines were red.

There is no wall-passage in the triforium¹, which is closed with a blank wall (Fig. 20), and had only a window at the west end, the remains of which you will see directly. This was in accordance with the desire of the Cistercians for simplicity.

The clerestory² has a round-headed window in each bay. Below the windows is a string-course, and another runs round the windows as a hood-mould (Figs. 20 and 95).

The nave was not vaulted. The aisles had

¹ The triforium is the story over the aisle, lying between the aisle vault and the sloping roof above it. It was originally an architectural necessity, but came to be used for other purposes and to have an ornamental arcade on the side facing the nave. It is sometimes called the blind-story as opposed to the clerestory. The derivation of the word is uncertain, but it is most probably from the Latin word *transforatum* (*foro*, pierce). It was first used by Gervase in the twelfth century in his description of the rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral, and was applied by him to any passage in the thickness of the wall.

² The clerestory or clear-story is the part of a building which is lighted with windows and rises above the adjoining parts.



FIG. 20. NAVE.



FIG. 21. NORTH AISLE.

a pointed barrel vault of stone concentric with the arches of the nave arcade, its compartments running as it were at right angles to the nave.

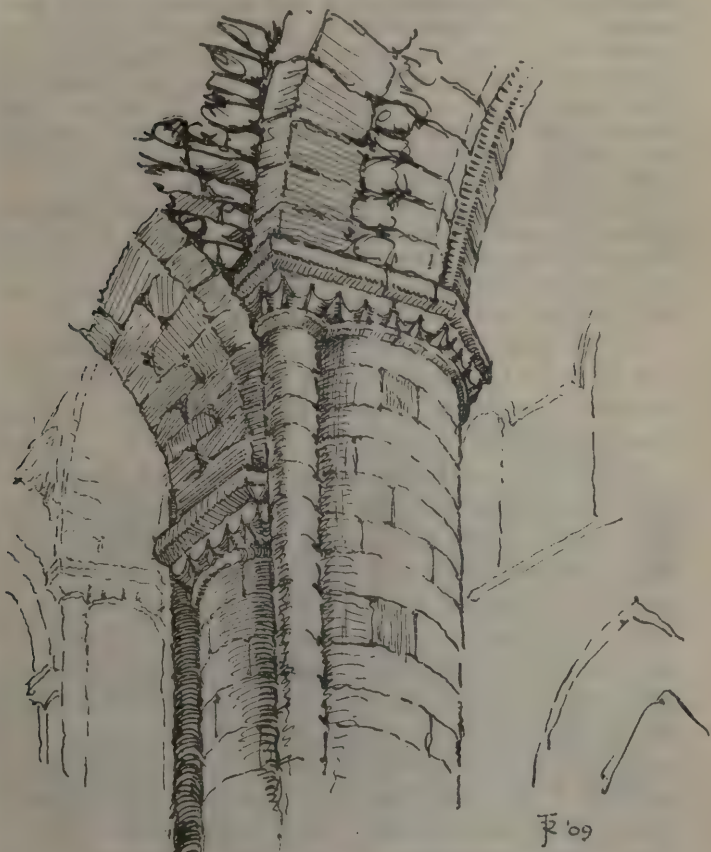


FIG. 22. SPRINGING OF NAVE ARCADE.

The vault rested on arches which spring from corbels¹ built into the pillars on one side and into

¹ Corbel, a stone or timber projecting from a wall to

the aisle walls on the other (Figs. 21 and 22). The vaulting has now all perished.

Fountains Abbey was one of the first buildings in England in which the pointed arch was used for the pier arcade. It was probably the Cistercian builders who popularized its use in arches of construction, while the semicircular arch was still used for doorways and windows. The pointed arch was introduced not for beauty, but because it facilitated building construction; as decoration, the semicircular arch continued to be used. Bond's *Gothic Architecture in England*, pp. 262-6.

The peculiar barrel vaulting of the aisles served in French Cistercian churches as a strong abutment to the stone barrel vault of the nave. Here the barrel vaulting of the nave was not attempted. See Mr. John Bilson's paper on Kirkstall Abbey, pp. 102-4.

There seems to have been a screen in front of the door at the west end, a fragment of the base remaining on the south; it would have carried the great organ.

In the west wall there is a doorway in the north aisle which was blocked by Darnton (Fig. 21). In the centre is the great west door, flanked by two side recesses which are raised above the floor and had stone benches in them (Fig. 20).

The windows at the west end were originally a great circular window, of which the outline is left, with three or perhaps two round-headed windows below it¹ (Fig. 23). In front of the windows was a lofty arch with a wall-passage behind. In 1494 Darnton inserted the present great window (Fig. 20). If you pass through the west door and look up at this window you see carry a weight. From *corvus*, a raven, as the corbel was originally cut slantwise, so that in profile it looked like a raven's beak.

¹ On each side you can see the springing stones of the hood-moulds.

FOUNTAINS
ABBEY

SKETCH OF
WEST FRONT
RESTORED.



FIG. 23.

over it a niche with a figure of the Virgin and Child. This is carried by a corbel carved with the eagle of St. *John* holding a crosier and perched on a *tun*, with a scroll lettered '*dern 1494*', that is a rebus¹ for John Darnton (Figs. 24 and 25).



FIG. 24. CORBEL OVER WEST WINDOW OF NAVE.

In the south aisle of the west wall is a doorway a little distance from the ground which opens into a circular staircase. This gives access to the wall-passage mentioned above and to another staircase running in the thickness of the wall to the roof. From here is a wide flight of steps which goes over the west window to reach the roof at the other side. There are two holes on each side of each step, which may have been for two handrails, but are more likely to have been for dowels.² In the former case the handrails would have stood

¹ A representation of a name by pictures or figures (*rebus* is Latin for *by things*) instead of by words.

² Iron pins sunk into stones to prevent them moving.



FIG. 25. NICHE OVER WEST WINDOW OF NAVE.



FIG. 26. NICHE ON WEST SIDE OF TOWER.

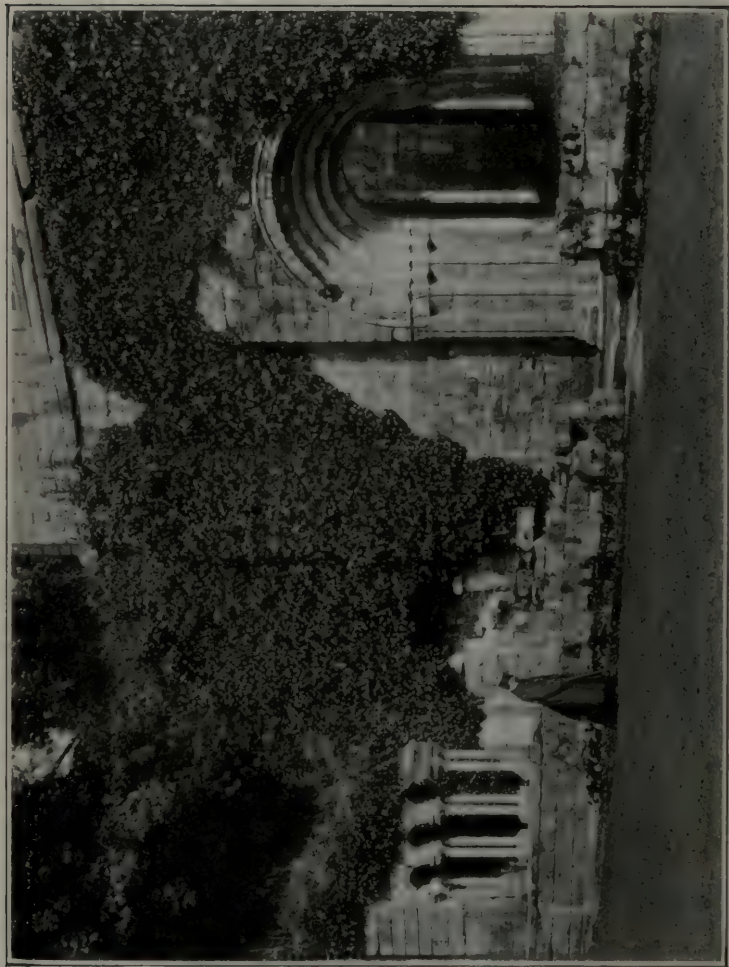


FIG. 96. WEST DOOR AND PORCH.

against the sky-line. In the latter the steps, owing to the necessity of protecting them by a parapet on one or both sides, would have had the effect of raising the gable wall to an unusual height above the roof.

There seem to have been similar steps on the gable of the south transept, only here they ran down on each side from the top of the staircase in the centre. On the east side the gutters ran along the wall to a staircase in the south-east pier of the central tower, the lower steps of which still remain. From here it would be easy to reach the gutters of the presbytery. Two octagonal turrets in the north-west and south-west corners of the chapel of the nine altars contained stairs which gave access to the roof of that portion of the church.

Outside the west door is a porch which seems to have been a favourite burial-place (Fig. 96). There were similar porches in the Cistercian abbeys of Rievaulx, Byland, Newminster, and Hayles. At Byland it was called the Galilee. The present arches have been erected from the old stones.

It is often thought that this porch was where monks could converse with their female relatives, but women were not allowed to enter the monastery gate¹ (*Nec monasterii portam ingredi permittuntur*). At a later period an exception was made at the Dedication festival,² *Excepto tempore Dedicationis*. There is no authority for another common idea, that monks used it when they were forbidden absolution.

If you now go round to the north side of the church you will see that the plinth mould is broken up to form little buttresses. These ran round the whole of the original church, and can be seen, for example, in the passage between the chapter-house

¹ *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 213.

² *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, pp. 290, 343, 397.

and the church and outside the unaltered transept chapels (Fig. 45).

Looking up, you can see fragments of the corbel-table¹ which surmounted the walls.²

On each side of the west window you can see the jamb of the little window which opened into the triforium beneath the aisle roof (Fig. 23).

Return now into the church and walk up the south aisle. You pass in turn a large doorway, blocked by Darnton, which had been the entrance for the lay-brethren, the entrance into the cellarium, the staircase from the dormitory of the lay-brethren, and, immediately to the east of it, remains of the doorway into the first cellarium. Above the staircase there is no window, as the first cellarium came against the wall there,³ and the window in the next bay is only open where it cleared the roof. Further on are the two drains we have already noticed, and close to the door into the cloister is the base of the holy-water basin. The basin itself is in the museum (Fig. 27).

Go once more to your old place beneath the crossing and look eastwards. Just in front of you are two steps, with a rebate⁴ for tiles, which form the approach to the presbytery (*gradus presbyterii*). As was the case in the nave, there were two rows

¹ A row of corbels (see note, p. 30) used to carry a flat moulding or a parapet. A parapet is the low wall rising above the gutter of a roof. Originally it was a breast-work or wall breast-high, from *pectus*, a breast.

² Mr. Hope says the walls of the nave had no parapets, but Mr. Reeve says that 'the nave and transepts clearly did possess parapets'.

³ See p. 104.

⁴ Rebate, from *rabattre*, to lower, is a rectangular groove cut along the face of a piece of stone or wood.

of pillars dividing the central space from the two side aisles, but nothing is left of them except two bases. There was also a wall¹ joining these pillars, as there was in the nave, and this was continued across the east end, shutting off the presbytery from the chapel of the nine altars which lies beyond. In the westernmost bay of the presbytery there was a doorway in the wall on each side called the



FIG. 27. HOLY-WATER STOUP.

upper entrance² (*introitus superior*) to the presbytery, as distinguished from the lower entrance (*introitus inferior*), which we saw³ was under the pulpitum. The inner side of the wall had an arcade of trefoiled arches carried by marble shafts. On the east side the arcade was open and double, and supported a gallery about 4 feet wide.

¹ This is very distinct in Rievaulx Abbey.

² On the north side you can see the holes for the double gate. You can see also the beginning of a staircase which led to a gallery over the entrance.

³ Page 28.

In the middle of the easternmost bay is the platform of the high altar covered with tiles, which are part of a coloured pavement¹ (*pictum pavimentum*) laid down by Abbot John of Kent. Mr. Hope thinks, however, that the platform is simply an erection of Mr. Aislabe, who was owner of the abbey in the eighteenth century, and that the high altar would have stood further west.

Looking at the outer aisle wall (Fig. 28), you see on each side a stone wall on which stood an arcade of twenty-two trefoiled arches carried by marble shafts, of which only one, the most western on the north side, remains. Each bay has a tall lancet window with an arch on each side, unpleasing to the eye, which was supported on marble shafts. The two westernmost bays have a blank window on account of the chapel behind. On the south side notice the doorway which Darnton inserted into the vestry, and a drain on the bench in the sixteenth arch. The roof of the presbytery was a stone vault, which was removed by Darnton. The clerestory, with a passage in the thickness of its wall, was no doubt of the same design as that in the chapel of the nine altars.

If you look at the line of the original chapels on the turf and trace it to the walls on each side, that is, to the fifteenth arch, you will see a break in the masonry which shows that the part to the east was finished before the old presbytery was pulled down.

At the east end of the presbytery was a triple arch, carried on each side by marble shafts, which stood on the stone gallery mentioned on page 37. Beyond this is the eastern transept (Fig. 29), called the chapel of the nine altars, which was erected to

¹ Page 238.

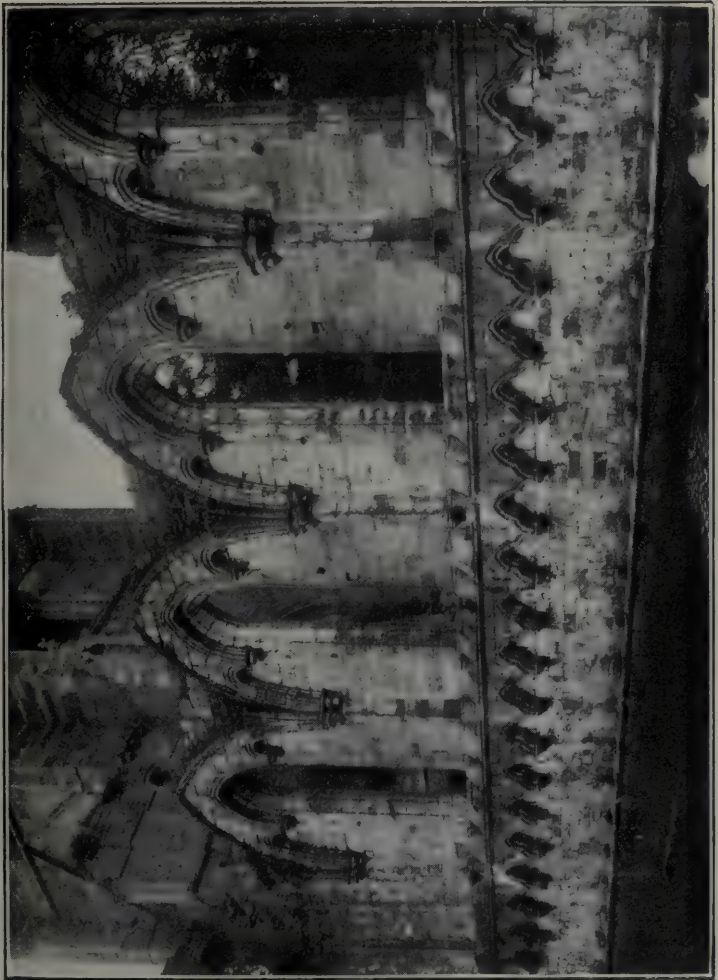


FIG. 28. PRESBYTERY.

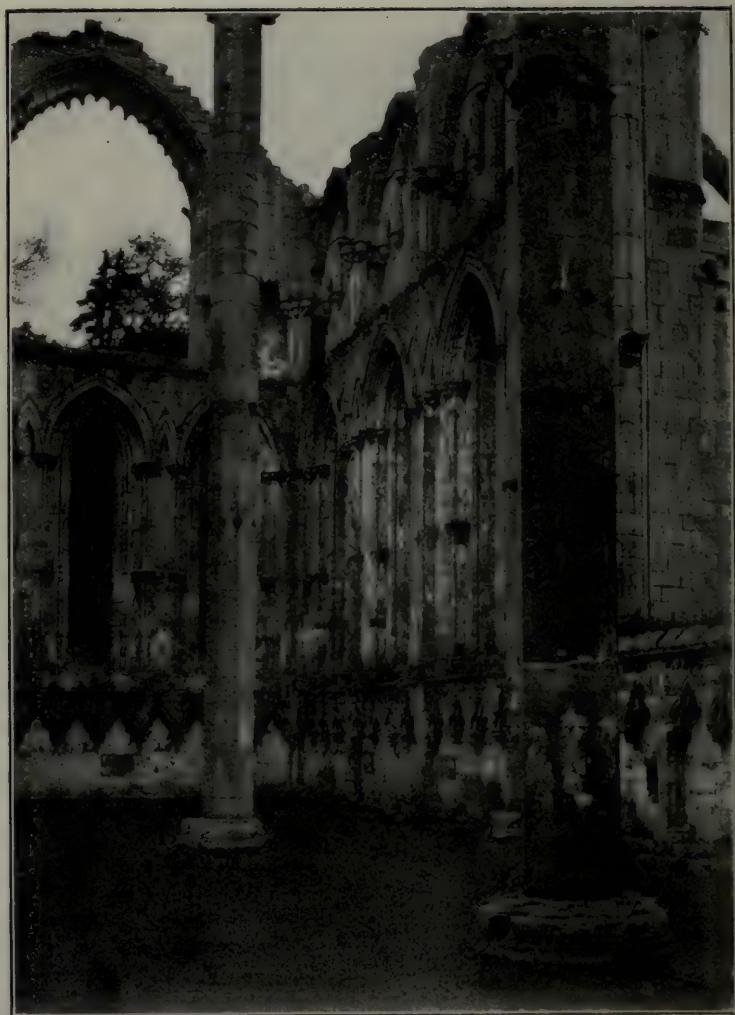


FIG. 29. CHAPEL OF THE NINE ALTARS.

give additional altars at which those monks who were priests might say their daily mass. Owing to the rapid growth of the order the need for increase was felt in nearly all Cistercian churches, and led to enlargement of the presbyteries, but this precise method of enlargement is peculiar to Fountains.¹

The chapel is 117 feet in length, and is divided by two arcades which were in a line with those of the presbytery. The pillars, about 50 feet high,



FIG. 30.

are octagonal, and were surrounded by eight marble shafts. The arches of the arcades are the work of Darnton, who probably found the church in a state of bad repair.² He took down the stone vaults of this chapel and the presbytery and the upper part of the arch between them, and replaced them by an open roof of wood. You can still see the horizontal wall courses of the springers of the vaults which he left after he had removed the mouldings.³

¹ Mr. Hope thinks it suggested the similar chapel at Durham, which is its only parallel.

² In 1478 Sir John Pilkington bequeathed ten pounds, 'to the making of the Abbaye Kirke of Fountaunce' (Walbran's *Memorials*, p. 150).

³ He did the same with the springing stones of the three

That the vault of the chapel was in a dangerous condition may be surmised from the settlement of two of the windows, the most northern on the east side and the most eastern on the south side. Darnton repaired the settlement of the first window by inserting a stone carved on the outside with a head (Fig. 30) and on the inside with a rose and



FIG. 31.

an angel carrying a scroll with the inscription 'Anno Domini 1483' (Fig. 31). In the other he inserted a carving which on the outside (Fig. 32) has an angel with *dern* on his breast, and holding a tun, above which is the eagle of St. John (a rebus for John Darnton) and a contracted form (BND FONTES DNO) of the words *Benedicite fontes*

transverse arches between the presbytery and the chapel of the nine altars.

Domino (O ye Wells, bless ye the Lord), and on the inside (Fig. 33) an angel holding a shield, above which are an abbot's head, a scroll between two fish, and a figure of St. James the Great.

St. James, the patron saint of Spain, is said to have been buried at Compostella. He is usually represented with a long staff, a cape, a flapped hat, and the scallop shell which pilgrims wore as a token of having visited his shrine.

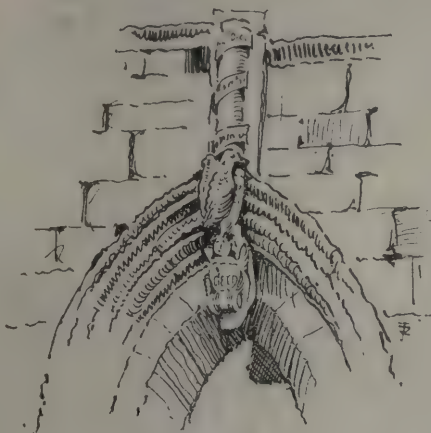


FIG. 32.

An arcade, like that in the presbytery, is carried round the walls of the chapel, but along the east wall the seat is omitted. On this side you notice that the arcade is divided into groups of arches, three of four arches on each side and three of three arches in the centre (Fig. 34). Running from between these groups were stone walls, 8 feet 2 inches high, with gabled tops¹ (Fig. 35), which thus formed nine separate chapels for nine altars.

¹ This is visible in some places against the east wall.

At some later period the three central chapels were joined into one, perhaps because they were found to be too near to each other. A raised platform ran along the whole length of the east wall on which the altars and the dividing walls stood.

The stone walls were replaced at a later time by wooden partitions, and the outer mouldings of the arches being removed the east wall was wainscoted. The string-course under the window-sills is cut away where the wooden

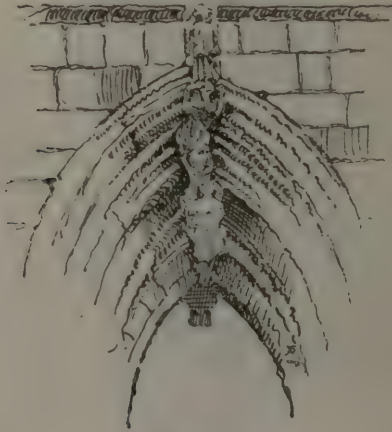


FIG. 33.

partitions came against it, and at the north and south ends, about 13 feet from the east wall, for the wooden screen which closed the line of chapels. Mr. Hope quotes a corresponding alteration at Durham.

There were cupboards in the wall at the sides of the altars, many of which have been built up, and there were drains in the floor at the south side of the altars, of which four still remain. Two others are in the museum,

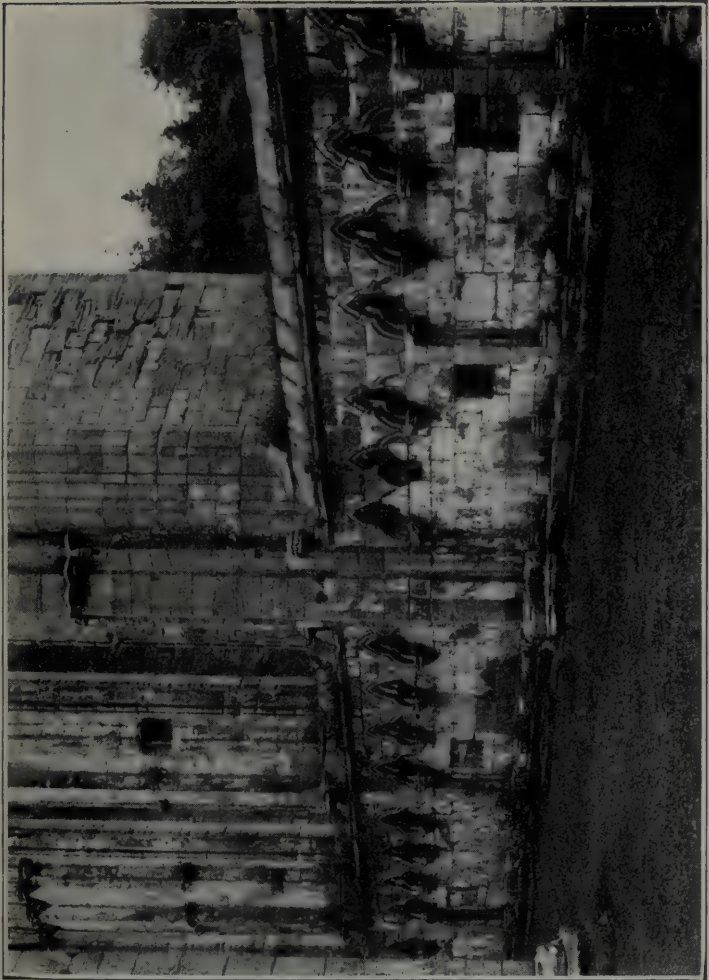


FIG. 34. CHAPEL OF THE NINE ALTARS.



FIG. 37. SOUTH END OF CHAPEL OF THE NINE ALTARS.

Mr. Hope quotes from Durandus with reference to the use of these drains. Before the priest poured the wine and water into the chalice, he poured a few drops of each on the ground in case any dust were in the necks of the cruets which contained them. This act was considered also to be a symbol of the blood and wine flowing from the side of Christ.¹

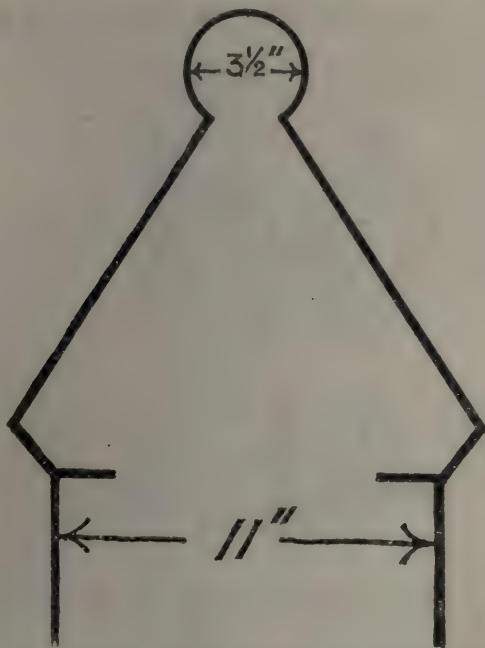


FIG. 35. GABLED TOP OF WALL.

Note on the north wall of the chapel under the third arch from the east an inscription on the whitewash—*altare sci iacobi apli* (the altar of St. James the Apostle)—and on the south wall a drain of elaborate design under the second arch (Fig. 36).

¹ *Rationale divinatorum officiorum*, lib. iv, cap. xxx.

Behind each altar, that is, behind each group of arches, there was one tall lancet window. Above the three central lancets, of which there is evidence in the bases of two buttresses which we shall see on the outside, was probably a wheel window in the gable above the vaulted roof, but all four windows were replaced by Darnton by the present



FIG. 36. DRAIN IN CHAPEL OF NINE ALTARS.

large perpendicular window of nine lights.¹ At each end of the chapel were three lancets, but on the south side Huby filled the bottom of the westernmost window with a pew, which projected into the church from a gallery outside, and from

¹ At the same time Darnton enlarged and strengthened the two buttresses against the outside of the east wall on each side of the window which took the thrust of the arches behind them.

which there was perhaps a staircase to the floor below (Figs. 37 and 45).

In the clerestory there was a wall passage, with an open arcade consisting of a wide and two narrow arches in front and small lancet windows behind. In the east wall these corresponded to the windows below, but in the north and south ends there were probably two lancets surmounted by a wheel window in the gable above the vault, which Darnton replaced by the present wide windows of seven lights.

Here it will be as well to go out of the north door and look at the outside. First examine the tower and the building on its east side (pp. 19–26). Then notice against the transept chapels the little buttresses from the plinth mould, and on the top of the north transept wall a fragment of the corbel-table.

Further on you will notice a difference in the north and south sides of the aisle walls of the presbytery. On the north side the buttresses are of the same projection from top to bottom, and terminated in long slender gables. The windows seem to have had gables like the west windows of the transept chapels. On the south side the buttresses are sloped back and have short gables with pinnacles behind. Over the windows is a horizontal corbel-table to carry the parapet. From each buttress was a flying buttress over the aisle roofs; the springers of some are still visible.

As you pass from the north to the south side note the stone placed in the northernmost window on the east wall of the chapel of the nine altars, the two enlarged buttresses, the small buttresses indicating three lancet windows where the great

window now is, the stone inserted in the easternmost window on the south side of the chapel of the nine altars, and the corbel-tables up the gables of the south transept chapels.

To the east of these chapels (Figs. 2 and 45) a large room, 49 feet by 13, was built by Huby against the south wall of the presbytery. We noticed on page 17 the approach to it from the enlarged transept chapel.

CHAPTER II

THE INFIRMARY—INFIRMITORIUM



AFTER examining the church it would be more logical to visit the cloister, which ranked next to it in importance, but it is more convenient to describe next the infirmary.








Leaving the chapel of the nine altars by the door at the south end, you enter a passage. After going a few yards turn to the left, and you come to the remains of a

doorway with the bases of five marble shafts on its left side (Fig. 39). This is the doorway to the hall of the infirmary.

The infirmary was the abode of the sick monks and those who had been professed fifty years. They were in charge of an official called *infirmarius*,¹ who with the help of assistants (*solatium*) acted as their doctor, nurse, and spiritual adviser. In

¹ He was sometimes called the master of the infirm (*magister infirmorum*), sometimes the servant of the infirm (*servitor infirmorum*).

REFERENCE

-  NORMAN *late 11th*
-  NORMAN *immediately after 1100*
-  13th CENTURY
-  14th CENTURY
-  15th CENTURY
-  15th CENTURY *(1470-1480)*
-  15th CENTURY *(1480-1490)*

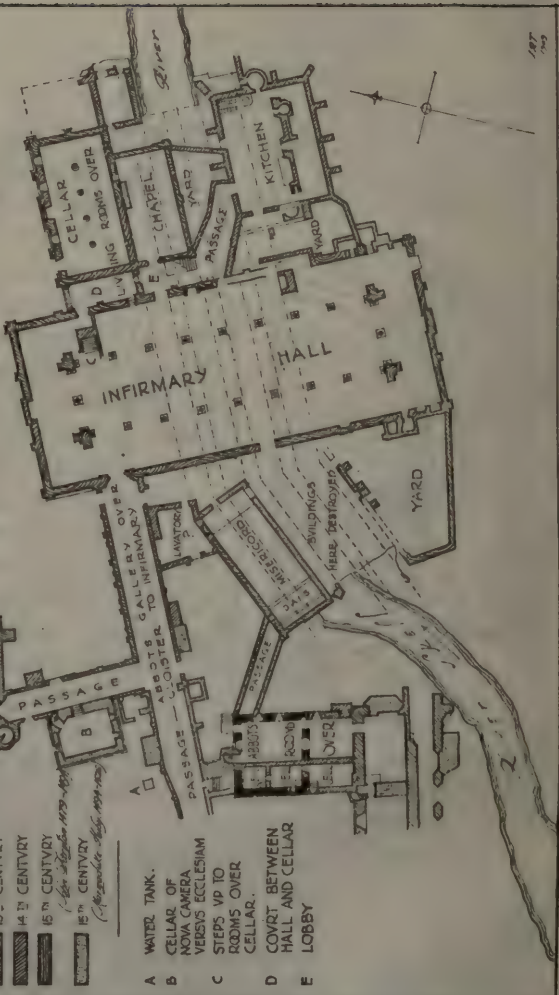
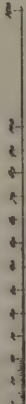
- A WATER TANK.
- B CELLAR OF
NONA CAMERA
VERSUS ECCLESIA
- C STEPS UP TO
ROOMS OVER
CELLAR.
- D COVRT BETWEEN
HALL AND CELLAR
- E LOBBY

THE CHVRCH

CHAPEL
OF THE
NINE
ALTARS

THE INFIRMARY

Scale of Feet



187
193

FIG. 38.

addition to his duties to the sick and aged the infirmarius four times a year bled the whole community in small batches. In other orders the monks took advantage of this operation to lie up for four days in the infirmary, but this indulgence was not granted to the stricter Cistercians, who were expected to remain in cloister after being bled, though the rule was probably relaxed in later times.¹



FIG. 39. BASE STONE OF DOORWAY TO INFIRMARY HALL.

As soon as a monk was ill, the infirmarius fetched from the refectory and dormitory his cup, rations, and bed. From the library he got the sick monks books to read, but had to return them to their place before compline. On Saturdays, if they wished it, he washed their feet² and shook out their clothes.³

Silence had to be observed in the infirmary as in the

¹ To lose one's turn in being bled was regarded as a punishment by the lay-brethren. *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 464.

² See p. 94.

³ *Consuetudines*, cxvi. If a story quoted by E. Sharpe in his paper on the *Domus Conversorum* is to be trusted, the monks shook out a good deal more than dust from their garments.

cloister, and the sick monk could only speak to the infirmarius in a certain room appointed for the purpose.¹

When a monk was near death, he was placed on a rug which was laid on the ground over ashes strewn in the form of a cross. The monks were then all summoned to the dying man's side.²

It may be noted here that monks were expected to find health both of soul and body within the walls of their own monastery. 'Let those who leave the monastery to go on pilgrimage or to get medical advice, be deemed to be fugitives. Let those, however, who get cut into or cut open for stone or rupture, be placed last of all in their own houses, and be on bread and water every Friday at the pleasure of the visitor.'³

A. THE INFIRMARY HALL

The infirmary hall (Fig. 40) was built by John of Kent, abbot from 1220 to 1247. There must have been an infirmary before this time, but there is no mention of it. The hall was built over the river Skell on account of the narrowness of the site available for building,⁴ and is supported on four tunnels which will be described later. The hall was 170 feet long and 70 feet wide, and consisted of a central nave of eight bays with an aisle running all round. The arcade which separated the nave from the aisle consisted of eight arches at each side and two at each end, and was carried on columns, several bases of which still remain. A peculiar feature of the hall is that the four angles of the central nave were each supported by a pair of buttresses projecting into the aisle. There must

¹ *Consuetudines*, xcii and cxvi.

² *Consuetudines*, xcii.

³ *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 341.

⁴ The cemetery lay to the east of the church.

have been a clerestory. At each end of the hall was a large fireplace.

At a later time, for the greater comfort of the inmates the aisle was broken up into separate rooms by partition walls, and fireplaces were put in some of them. This you can best see in the two rooms on each side of the great fireplace in the south wall. The room in the western corner has a fireplace in the west wall with a recess on one side of it, and on the other an entrance to a gong¹ and an ash-pit. The room in the eastern corner has a fireplace in the east wall with openings on each side similar to those of the other room, and in the south wall a recess.

If you look north from this last room you can see a large fireplace standing out, and that the wall to its side has been placed back. If you stand on this wall with your back to the fireplace you have just in front of you a yard which opens into the infirmary kitchen.

B. THE INFIRMARY KITCHEN

The infirmary kitchen, 50 feet by 38, was divided into two parts by a thick wall, the northern portion, 22½ feet wide, forming the kitchen proper, the southern portion, 11 feet wide, the scullery. Round the building are the bases of several buttresses, which indicate that it was vaulted in stone. Three remain on the south side, two on the north, two on the east, and two at the north-east and south-east corners.²

¹ I have used this old English word throughout as being preferable to latrine or water-closet. It is derived from the word go.

² In the north-east buttress is a doorway blocked by

Little remains in the scullery except some paving at the east end.

In the wall between the scullery and the kitchen were three doorways, one at each end and a third between two large fireplaces. At the side of the western fireplace are five steps in the thickness of the wall, which were perhaps built for the purpose of smoking bacon in the more degenerate days of the monastery. On the east side of the other fireplace was a copper built by Huby.

In the middle of the east wall was another copper built by Huby. On its north side is a peculiar stone grating, which may have served to dispose of refuse, and on its south was an enormous oven also built by Huby.

On the north side of the kitchen were two doorways, one leading to the cellar past the east wall of the chapel, the other leading by an oblique passage to the infirmary hall.

The west wall had a fireplace and oven, and must have had also a doorway into the yard, but the wall is almost entirely destroyed.

A courtyard lies between the kitchen and the chapel, with two small openings into the river below.

C. THE INFIRMARY CHAPEL

The infirmary chapel (Fig. 41), lying to the north of the kitchen, was 46 feet by 21½. A lobby (Fig. 38, E) lies between it and the hall, in which

Huby, and, according to Mr. Hope, there was another through the northern buttress of the east wall, and between the two a bridge seven feet wide leading to the yard to the north of the kitchen. But this seems a devious rout



FIG. 40. INFIRMARY HALL.



FIG. 41. INFIRMARY CHAPEL.



FIG. 42. THE CELLAR.



FIG. 43. EAST END OF TUNNELS.

is the base of a flight of steps leading to rooms over the cellar. In the chapel are the altar platform, a foundation block of Huby's limestone, and in the north-east corner a staircase leading to the same rooms over the cellar. Part of the original jamb of the east window remains, but may have been put in its present position when excavations were made in 1848.

D. ROOMS OVER THE CELLAR

The rooms over the cellar, just mentioned, have perished entirely, but three staircases show that they must have existed. The main staircase ran from the hall of the infirmary close to the north-eastern corner of its nave (Fig. 38, c), and entered an antechamber over the court¹ (Fig. 38, d) between the hall and the cellar. The other two staircases have been already noted. One led from the chapel, the other from the lobby to the antechamber just mentioned, and was doubtless to carry meals straight from the kitchen. A mass of masonry lies to the east of the chapel, which perhaps represents a fourth staircase leading to the room to the east over the tunnel which, as we shall see, contained a gong.

The cross walls in the cellar seem to indicate that there were three rooms. In the centre one was a pew, built by Huby, which projected into the chapel and was supported on the block of stone which still remains; it was perhaps built to enable the inmate to hear mass from his room. Mr. Hope

¹ We shall see in this court grooves for the pipes which supplied water to the chambers.

suggests that these rooms were used by the Abbot of Citeaux or his deputy at the annual visitation of the abbey.¹

E. THE CELLAR AND ADJACENT COURTS

Before going down the steps to the cellar, go through a doorway to the right into a room which was built over the northernmost tunnel and was about 20 feet by 12. In front of the door is a shoot into the river. In the north-east corner was a gong, and in the south-east corner a window or doorway.

Mr. Hope says there were 'several other' gongs in the space between two transverse arches at the east, but this seems impossible. He also says that the opening in the north-east corner led 'eastwards into some building . . . over the second tunnel, which was of the same length as the first'. But, as we shall see, the second tunnel seems to have been much shorter than the first.

Now descend the steps and you come to the cellar (Fig. 42), which was 58 feet by 27, and consisted of five bays with a central row of pillars. Its stone vaulting has only fallen in recent years.

Two walls running transversely at the first pillar (counting from the east) and at the third divided it into three parts.

The east wall is a modern erection. The north wall had a doorway, three windows, and a fireplace. The south wall, in addition to the steep flight of steps leading to the kitchen, has two openings into the river. The one to the east was originally double; when you explore the tunnels you will see how well it was built.

¹ See pp. 3, 4.

In the vault above this opening is a square hole which must have carried a pipe from the room above through the cellar into the river. There is a cut in the vaulting rib to carry it, and there are two holes below for holders.

To the east of the cellar there was a room which is quite ruined.

To the west of the cellar and on the same level is a court, 27 feet by 11, lying between it and the hall of the infirmary, from which steps led down to its north-west corner. The court opened on to the cemetery which lay at the east end of the church, and perhaps, as Mr. Hope suggests, to the herb-garden which sometimes adjoined the infirmary.¹

In the fourteenth century an arch was built at the north end, which must have been open to the bottom, as on the outside the plinth is returned round the jamb of the arch, a wall was built up at the south, and the whole roofed over. A doorway in the south end led up to the lobby outside the chapel, and another in the south-west to one of the rooms partitioned off in the infirmary hall. Subsequently the arch was built up and a window inserted in it, and at the same time the doorway in the south end was blocked. The object of these changes is unknown.

Notice the grooves in the east wall for the pipes which supplied water to the chambers over the cellar.

F. THE MISERICORD AND OTHER ROOMS TO THE WEST OF THE INFIRMARY HALL

Return now to the doorway of the hall of the infirmary (Fig. 39). There are the remains of a doorway to your left with a passage from it. To the south of this passage were two rooms.

The first, irregular in form, is paved with stone. There was a doorway in the east wall, two in the

¹ Gasquet, p. 29.

south, and one in the west,¹ the three latter having been blocked at one time or another. In the west wall was a window, perhaps also a second, and in the south-east corner an opening into the river.

Mr. Walbran says that in this room was 'a reservoir of water fed by a lead pipe (still partly visible) from a spring above the kitchen bank', and Mr. Hope suggests that it was the place of the head conduit from which water was distributed to the rest of the monastery. The conduit was close to the infirmary hall both at Waverley and Beaulieu.²

Mr. Reeve thinks the room was used to wash the dead, a duty which was conducted with much ceremony (*Consuetudines*, xciii). The wording of the rule seems to imply that there was a definite place for this. 'After this prayer let the corpse be removed to be washed' (*Post illam collectam deferatur mortuus ad lavandum*).

The second room was the misericord,³ or the hall in which in less strict times the monks were allowed to eat meat on certain days. The hall, 58 feet by 12, had at its east end a lobby with two doorways, one from the passage, the other in the south wall. At the opposite end is a raised dais, with a step of Huby's stone cut with quatre-

¹ The doorway in the west was turned into an opening for throwing out ashes, of which a large heap was found in the excavations of 1849. In the rubbish-heap were a spoon, two rings, fragments of pottery, and many other things; some of these are now in the museum.

² Brakspear's *Waverley Abbey*, p. 64; Hope's *Kirkstall Abbey*, p. 43.

³ This word, which originally meant compassion (from *misereo*, feel pity, and *cor*, heart), was also used for the projection on the under side of a folding seat, on which a monk could partly rest while standing in his stall.

foils. Along the north wall was a stone bench also built by Huby.

In the floor at the south-west corner are two openings, and from the tunnel below five others in line with them can be seen which have been covered over, and also two others in the tunnel to the north (Fig. 44, L, A, B). These show that the site was originally occupied by a building with a row of gongs, which probably represented the sanitary accommodation for the infirmary. The base of the north wall of this building can be seen lying against the north wall of the misericord. Ten feet east from the west wall is a doorway.

There is a drain to the river in the middle of the floor.

To the south of the misericord were other rooms which have been almost entirely destroyed. One may have been the misericord kitchen.

From the north-west corner of the misericord a double wall runs to the abbot's chambers, which represent a communicating corridor between these two buildings.

G. THE TUNNELS

The four tunnels (Figs. 43 and 44) over which the infirmary hall was built were originally 270, 235, 235, and 250 feet long, but are now shorter from the ends having fallen in. Starting from the west, they run 70 feet straight and then turn through an angle of $22\frac{1}{2}$ degrees to suit the bend of the stream. They are about $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet in height and 10 feet in width. They are paved, have a plinth $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet from the pavement, and are faced

with squared stones to the springing of the arch. Above this they are mostly rubble.

There are three cutwaters at the west end of the tunnels ; the northernmost of these is curiously inclined to the abutment.

If you start at the west end of the most northern tunnel, you come at a distance of $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet to a blocked gong (A), and $44\frac{1}{2}$ feet further to another (B). These have just been mentioned as having belonged to the building which preceded the misericord. At the bend of the stream is the opening (C) to the lavatory (p. 56). Ten feet to the east of this is a drain (D), $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet square, which looks from its length and direction as if it had been constructed to drain the cemetery which lay to the east of the church. There is a similar drain (E) 97 feet further on, and just over it is a spout which carried off water from the pipes in the east wall of the court next the cellar (p. 55). At a distance of 13 feet is the double shoot (F), and 40 feet further is the single shoot (G) from the cellar. The opening (H) in front of the door to the room to the south-east of the cellar is 14 feet east, and 15 feet further is a gong (J) ; these were noticed on p. 54. Beyond this gong was a segmented arch (K), of which the springers still remain. Its purpose is not clear, but it seems impossible that it should have been erected to provide gongs, as Mr. Hope suggests.

To explore the second tunnel you will have to wade. This is easy, as the pavement is in fair condition. Five feet from the west end begin the series of gongs (L) mentioned on p. 57. The first two are open and the other five blocked ; the fifth and sixth are closer together than the others. On the haunch of the arch about opposite the fourth

PLAN OF TUNNELS

under *The Great Injirmary*

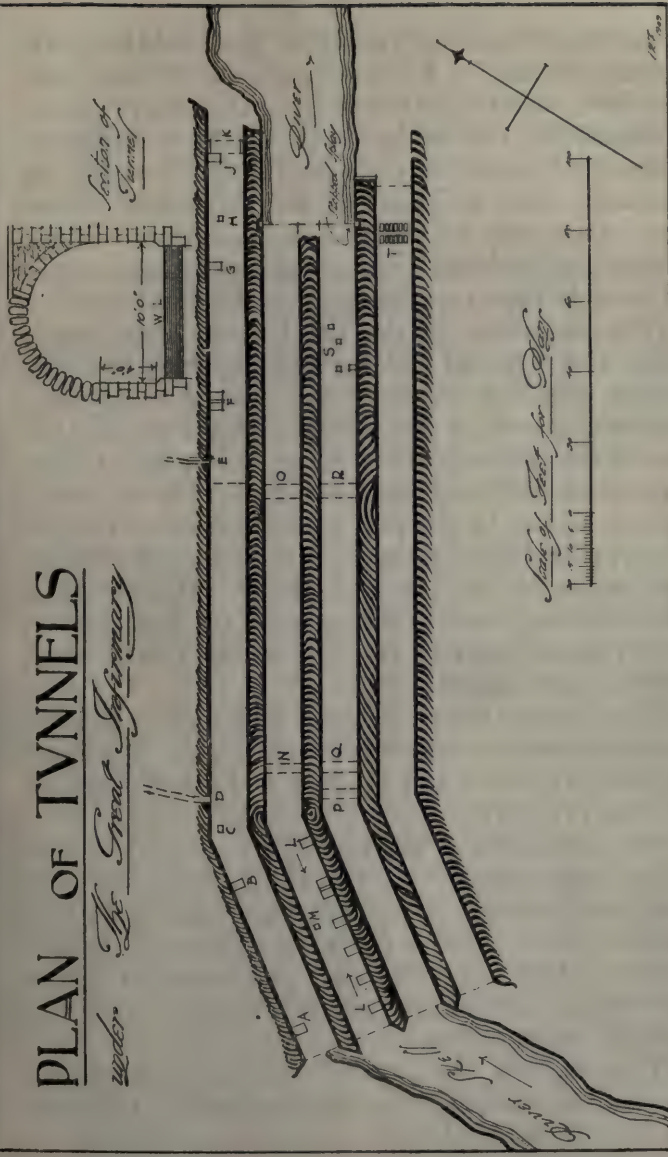


FIG. 44.

1871

gong is an opening (M) from the middle of the misericord floor. A reinforcing arch, $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet wide, has been inserted $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the bend (N), and another, $3\frac{5}{8}$ feet wide, $78\frac{1}{2}$ feet further on (O). These two arches have been inserted beneath the east and west walls of the infirmary hall. From the latter arch to the end dressed stone is used instead of rubble, and a similar change occurs at exactly the same distance in the first tunnel.

The pavement in the third tunnel has largely gone, and you will find that wading with bare feet is not pleasant. Just to the east of the bend a reinforcing arch, 3 feet wide, has been inserted (P), and there are two others (Q, R), 3 feet and $4\frac{1}{8}$ feet wide, under the east and west walls of the infirmary. About 35 feet to the east of the second of these is a group of four openings (S) in the yard between the infirmary kitchen and chapel. One of them, now blocked, looks as if it might have been a gong, but is almost too narrow; the others, two blocked, were square shoots.

The fourth tunnel fell into a bad state and has been blocked for safety at both ends. The large opening (T) from the kitchen is 12 feet from its east end (p. 52).

The arch of the fourth tunnel seems to be of rubble throughout. In the third tunnel the east end is of dressed stone, but this soon dies away into rubble. There is no distinct change from one to the other, as in the first and second tunnels. The third and fourth seem altogether to be of inferior workmanship.

The end of the fourth tunnel is distinctly marked by the plinth of the abutment. The ends of the second and third tunnels are marked by

two stopped splays exactly opposite each other on the abutments. The end of the first tunnel is not clearly marked. Against its south side there is an offset on the abutment, which perhaps gave Mr. Hope the idea that the second tunnel was of the same length as the first.

H. THE GALLERY FROM THE CLOISTER TO THE INFIRMARY

Returning once again to the doorway of the infirmary hall, you see a passage running before you with a shorter passage branching off to the north which divides it into an eastern and a western part. This was the corridor from the cloister to the infirmary.

The eastern part and the northern branch were built by Abbot John of Kent (1220-47). The western part was not built till the fourteenth century, when it probably replaced a meaner structure which would have been the passage to the original infirmary if this stood, as Mr. Hope has suggested, to the east of the chapter-house.

The east part, and probably the north, consisted of open arcades of trefoil arches supported on twin shafts. Judging from the buttresses¹ there were seven bays in the east and four in the north part. In the seventh bay on the south side was an archway, and there was also an archway over the corridor at the end of the east portion. In the first bay on the north side was a doorway, perhaps inserted to lead to a staircase to the floor above. In the east side of the north gallery was a doorway opening to the cemetery.

¹ The original ones are very shallow.

The west part was narrower than the east, and probably therefore followed the lines of the original corridor. The object of this would be to keep the north wall away from the angle of the chapter-house, and as soon as the angle was cleared the corridor was widened. There was an archway on each side where the widening began. The wider part of the west corridor consisted, like the north and east corridors, of open arcades of trefoil arches, supported on twin shafts, fragments of which still remain, but it is possible that the narrower part was never arcaded.

In the fourteenth century an upper story of wood¹ was added to the east and north corridors, for the support of which additional buttresses were built and the open arcade filled with solid masonry. A chimney on the south side and a block in the lavatory, which perhaps carried a bay window, also acted as substantial buttresses. A large block immediately to the west of the chimney, which might also have carried a bay window, seems of later date. There is a large block against the east side of the north passage, between the church and the doorway to the cemetery, on or near which Mr. Walbran found 'considerable remains of an oven with its ashes—since unfortunately removed—that, I apprehend, had been used for the preparation of the eucharistic wafer'.²

¹ The walls were too thin to allow of a more solid structure. The sides of the southern chimney in this upper floor 'show no signs of the starting of stone walls' (Reeve).

² This was one of the duties of the sacristan, and was performed with great solemnity (*Consuetudines*, cxiv).

To the north and west passages Huby (1494–1526) made considerable alterations.

In the former he rebuilt most of the west wall and added a structure¹ at its side, the basement of which still remains (Fig. 45). In the north and east walls are steps down to the basement, and in the north-east corner is a vice leading to the room above and to the upper floor of the gallery. There is a doorway in the wall between this structure and the church. Against the church can be seen the marks of the original roof of the gallery and of the later roof when the upper story was added (Fig. 45). As we saw on p. 44, the gallery led to a pew, built by Huby, which projected into the church.

In the west gallery the arcade was walled up and a buttress built on the north side to support an upper story. To the west of the buttress is a large structure which may have carried a chimney in the floor above. Notice a water-tank just to the west of this. The eastern part of the south wall was pulled down and rebuilt to bring it into line with the south wall of the east gallery. There is a buttress in the middle of the piece of new wall, and at its eastern end is a square room with a drain which doubtless carried a gong in the gallery above. There are the remains of a similar room on the opposite side. At the west end of the new wall is a doorway and staircase which led to the upper gallery and the abbot's chambers.

The upper part of the gallery to the west of the staircase may have been a library. There was

¹ This was probably 'the new chamber towards the church' (*nova camera versus ecclesiam*) which Mr. Walbran quotes from a homage done to Huby in 1501.

a bridge from it to the part of the dormitory over the chapter-house. The whole of the rest of the upper part of the corridor probably belonged to the abbot's private rooms. The gallery stopped at a pentice erected against the east wall of the dormitory.

I. THE ABBOT'S CHAMBERS

The abbot was obliged by the constitutions of the order to sleep in the dormitory.¹ In later times, however, he had rooms of his own which were reached by the staircase just noticed.

These rooms were not built for this purpose, but only adapted in the fourteenth century from a structure already existing. They were much enlarged afterwards by Huby.

The original structure, 25 feet by 28, was cut off from the sanitary block of the first dormitory, and formed perhaps the sanitary accommodation for the first infirmary. In the fourteenth century it was enlarged by extending it as far as the north wall of the sanitary block of the new dormitory, and a wall was built running north and south which divided the whole into two parts. Huby still further enlarged it by taking in the east end of this sanitary block.

The fourteenth-century wall divided the basement into two parts. The east portion probably formed the cellar. There is the base of a chimney breast against its east wall; a vice in the north-east end of the block led down to it. The west

¹ *Consuetudines*, cx. He is to sleep in the dormitory and take his meals in the guest-house (*In dormitorio jacere, in hospitio comedere*).

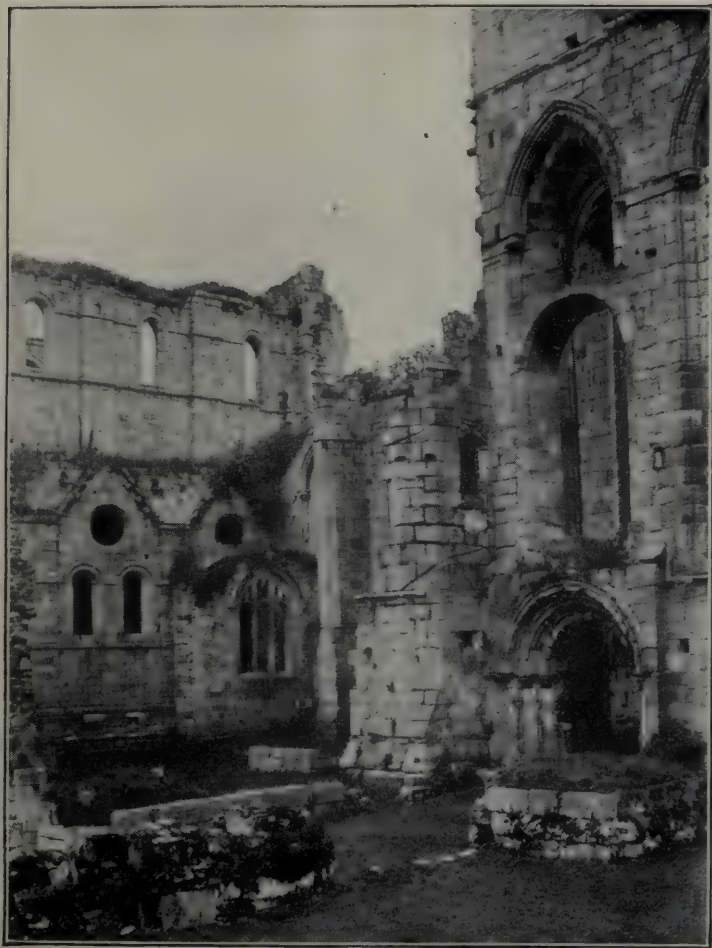


FIG. 45. SOUTH END OF CHAPEL OF THE NINE ALTARS.



FIG. 46. PRISON CELLS.

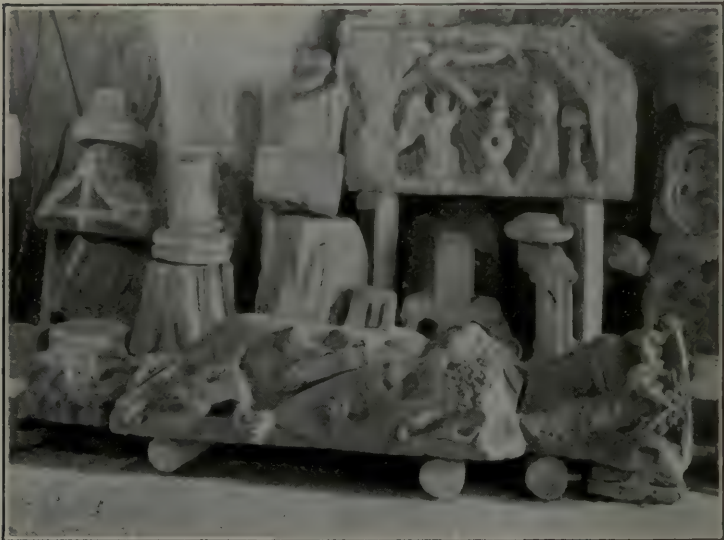


FIG. 47. EFFIGY OF DE MOWBRAY. Above is a sculptured representation of the Annunciation.

portion was cut up into three prison-cells (Fig. 46) which communicated with each other. In the south-west corner of each of the two smaller cells is a gong. In the larger cell are traces of black-letter scribbling; *vale libertas* (farewell liberty) could be once deciphered. The position of the iron staple for fastening the prisoners can be seen in all three. In the west wall of the middle cell there was perhaps a narrow window. In the larger cell there seems to have been a very narrow doorway which opened into the court to the west.

These cells were for monks, for although the abbots of other orders claimed jurisdiction over their immediate neighbourhood, and often also had the privilege of a gallows on which to hang evil-doers, the Cistercians were ordered to hand over offenders to the civil court.¹ Moreover, cells for outside delinquents were generally in the gate-house, and certainly never so near the centre of monastic life as these are. Monks, even for the crime of murder, were never handed over to the civil court but kept in custody within the walls, or removed to a remote monastery if the murdered man was not a monk and his friends threatened vengeance.²

The abbot's rooms are completely destroyed, but were probably three in number. On the original structure was the outer hall; on the fourteenth-century addition his sitting-room, which had a bay window in the east wall; Huby's addition served as a bedroom, which perhaps had a little oratory in the east and a gong in the south wall. As we saw before, there is a corridor from the northern room to the misericord, which would have served as the abbot's dining-hall in later days.

¹ *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 334.

² *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 319.

THE CLOISTER & BUILDINGS ROUND IT.

- A - NOVA CAMERA VERSVS ECCLESIAM
- B - ROOM BUILT BY HVBV
- C - CELLS D - GONG

THE CHVRCH

Reference







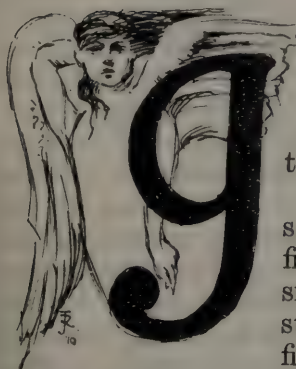
-  NORMAN - before fire of 1197
-  " - after fire
-  13TH CENTURY
-  14TH CENTURY
-  15 " (*John Duntton 1471-1499*)
-  15 " (*Marmaduke Holy 1804-1826*)



FIG. 48.

CHAPTER III

THE CLOISTER—CLAUSTRUM



O now to the end of the passage from the infirmary, and after passing through two doorways you come into the cloister.¹

This is about 125 feet square, and was from the first intended to be of that size, as parts of it, which still stand, were built before the fire (Fig. 48). A covered way, 11 feet wide, ran round, which was built by Abbot John of Kent (1220-47). This was cleared away entirely in the eighteenth century by the owner in order to make a garden, but fragments in the museum show that the wall to the court was an open arcade supported on twin shafts.

In the centre of the cloister is a stone platform with a large basin on it. It is doubtful whether the basin originally stood here. It was brought here in 1859 from the cellarium, where it had been used as a cider-mill.

The cloister ranked next in importance to the church, for it was the living-place of the monks.

¹ From *claudere*, to shut, enclose.

It was generally situated on the south side of the church for protection against the cold winds. This must have been badly needed in the winter, even if the arcading was glazed or closed with shutters, for there were no fires in the cloister, and the Cistercians were strict in the prohibition of skins and furs.¹ The senior monks occupied themselves with their studies in the north alley; the juniors lived in the west; the novices were taught in the east.²

The west wall of the cloister is nearly all of a date anterior to the fire, but it has been cased as high up as the cloister roof and furnished with buttresses. This was to enable the wall to meet the thrust of the vaulting of the rooms which were built on this side after the fire. Most of the recesses between the buttresses contain stone seats. At the north end is a door blocked by Huby. At the other is a doorway which had at its south side a loop, blocked by Huby, through which the porters³ could see the cloister. The third bay from this door is not so deep as the others; the wall here was removed to allow carts to pass at the excavation of 1850, and not properly replaced. In the north-west corner notice that the buttress from above fails to meet the buttress below, and a corbel has been inserted. Looking up at the south wall of the nave, you can see

¹ Their prohibition was implied by the Benedictine Rule (cap. lv), and the relaxation of the prohibition was one of the special things which led the founders of Citeaux to leave Molesme.

² Gasquet, pp. 17-19.

³ There were to be two on duty at the same time, two monks, or a monk and a lay-brother (*Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 333).

evidence that the five eastern bays were built before the rest in the curious way in which the buttresses of the clerestory fail to meet squarely the nave piers.

There are evidences of this in the north wall of the nave. (1) There is a break in the jointing both in aisle wall and clerestory. (2) The level of the plinth of the aisle wall is changed. (3) Only one course of stone runs beneath the string-courses under the clerestory windows as far as the centre of the fifth bay; beyond this point there are two courses occupying the same depth. (4) Looking at the wall from the outside, you see that the filling in between the clerestory buttresses at the back of the nave arches is in ashlar in the four eastern bays, in the western bays it is rough rubble. (J. A. Reeve, p. 17.)

Along the north wall of the cloister was a bench, the height of which is shown by the whitewash. The small buttresses which ran round the whole of the church have been removed, only one fragment remaining at the west end. Close to the entrance to the church is a blocked recess with a narrow blocked recess on each side of it.

Look now at the east wall. Against the second bay is a shallow recess (Fig. 49), which was the place in which books were kept for immediate use in the cloister. The books were in charge of the precentor. The buttress to the south has a small oblong recess, which may have been for the wax tablet on which the precentor cut every week the names of the monks who had to take a special part in the services.¹

In the next bay is a doorway opening into a passage. The first part of this was originally the vestry,² and the other part was a bare passage-way not roofed over. The western portion of the

¹ *Consuetudines*, cxv.

² Page 14.

vestry may have been cut off, as it was in some other Cistercian abbeys, to form the library. Notice in the north wall the projection for the dormitory stairs, the door into the church, and the small buttresses. In the south wall there was a doorway into the chapter-house which must have been blocked very early, for the string-course runs across it on the chapter-house side. Note the peculiarity of the roof. At the excavation of 1854 the doorways at both ends of the passage were found walled up and the passage itself filled with human bones.

A. THE CHAPTER-HOUSE—*Capitulum*

On Sunday mornings, after the blessing of the holy water before high mass, the whole community, under the direction of the precentor, left the choir in procession and visited and sprinkled with holy water all the buildings round the cloister in the following order:¹ *capitulum, auditorium, dormitorium et dormitorii necessaria, calefactorium, refectorium, coquinam, cellarium*. The first visited was the chapter-house, which stood in the centre of the eastern alley with three large archways opening into it (Figs. 49 and 50).

Every morning after mass the monks were summoned by the tolling of the bell by the sacristan to meet in the chapter-house. This daily meeting in chapter formed one of the essential elements in monastic life.

The business began by one of the monks reading from the book called the Martyrology the part which gave an account of the saints to be com-

¹ *Consuetudines*, lv.

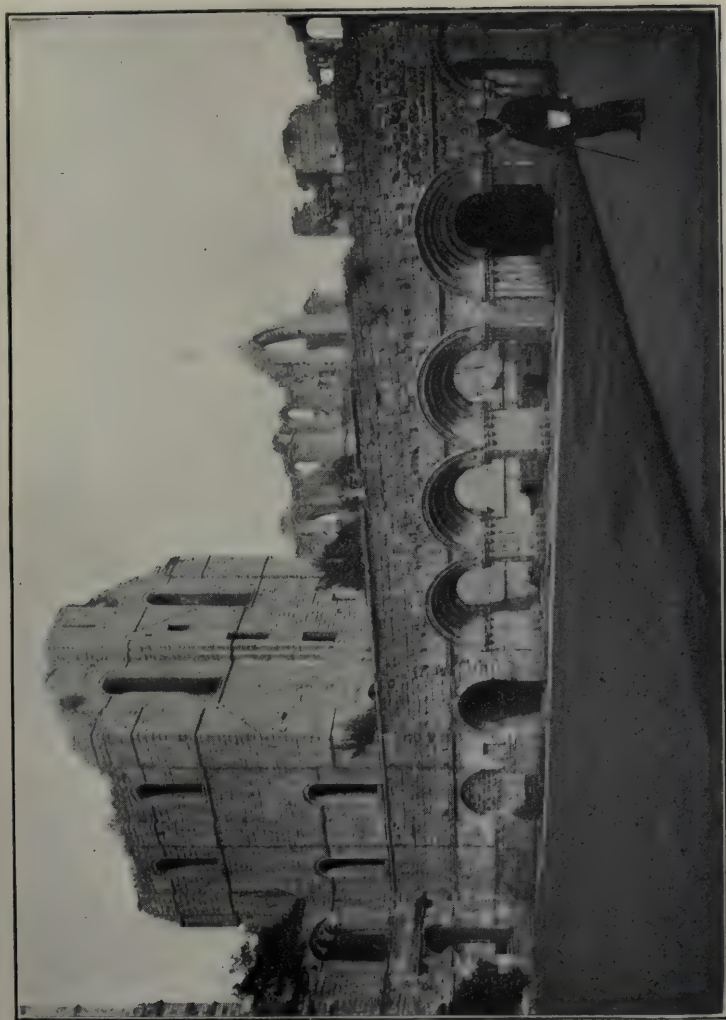


FIG. 49. EAST ALLEY OF CLOISTER.



FIG. 50. CENTRAL DOOR OF CHAPTER HOUSE.

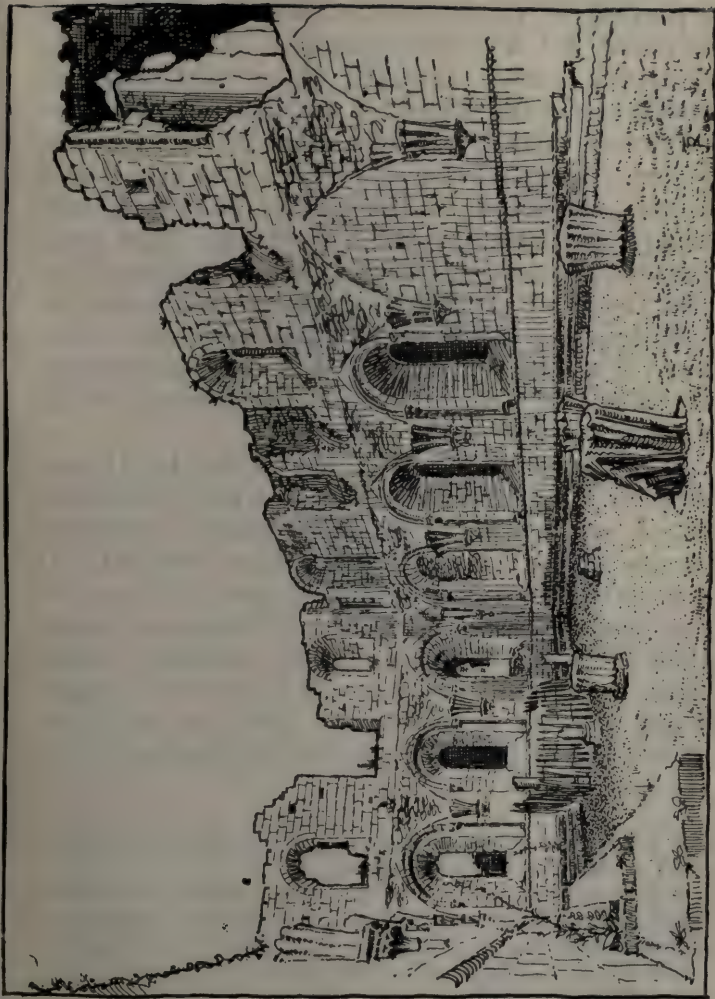


FIG. 51. CHAPTER-HOUSE.

memorated on the next day. He then read a portion¹ of the Rule of St. Benedict,² which was followed by a commemoration of the faithful departed. After this the abbot said, 'Let us speak about the affairs of our house' (*Loquamur de ordine nostro*), and the more private business began. Strict silence was kept about this, but it largely consisted in the monks confessing any breach of the rules which they may have committed. Instant retribution followed, generally in the shape of corporeal punishment inflicted by rods kept for the purpose.³ Sometimes the abbot gave a sermon in chapter, but this was strictly forbidden on Trinity Sunday 'on account of the difficulty of the subject'.⁴

The chapter-house (Fig. 51), 84 feet by 41, was divided into three aisles by two rows of pillars, which are marked very badly now by vaulting stones where the original bases are not left. It was vaulted in stone. There were six bays, the two western ones being nearly three feet lower than the others on account of the dormitory above them. The difficulty was met by a short column being inserted on the lower corbel on each side at the line of junction, to take the diagonal rib of the higher part (Fig. 52).

¹ *Capitulum* or little chapter. This word came to be used as the name of the building.

² Benedictine monks read it through three times a year. The Cistercians only read it through once, always beginning it on March 21, the feast of St. Benedict (*Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 316). The daily portion must have been very short.

³ *Consuetudines*, lxx; Gasquet, pp. 121-7.

⁴ *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 299. *Sed sermonem in capitulo propter difficultatem materiae fieri non oportet.*

There are eight windows, two on the north, three on the east, and three on the south, which were fitted with wooden frames to carry the glass.

Round the walls of the higher part of the room are the bases of three tiers of stone seats on which

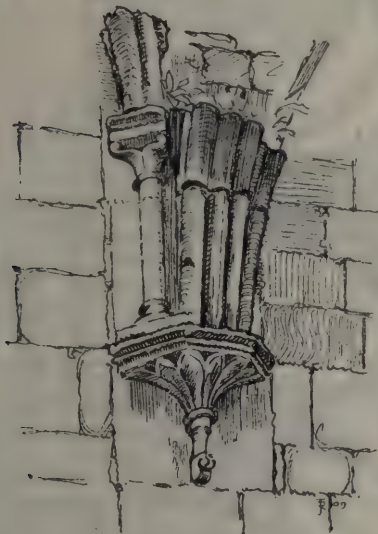


FIG. 52. CORBEL IN CHAPTER-HOUSE.

the monks sat ; there is a break in the centre of the eastern wall, where was placed the seat of the abbot (Fig. 53).

Nineteen abbots are mentioned as having been buried in the chapter-house. The stones are level with the ground, as ordered by the statutes, lest they should be in the way of passers.¹ The stone

¹ *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 344.

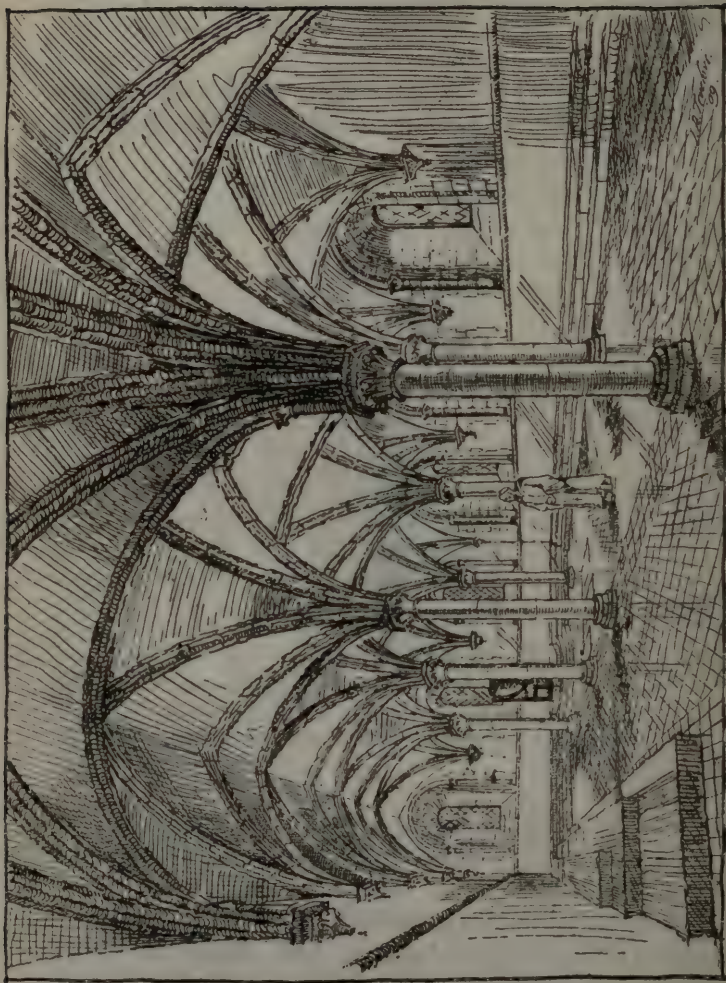


FIG. 53. ALLEGED RESTORATION OF CHAPTER-HOUSE.

in the centre in front of the abbot's seat is that of John of Kent, who died in 1247.

H^I REQIESCIT DOMP^NUS JOH'S X ABBAS DE
FONTIBU QUI OBIJT VII KL DECEMBRIS

In the second bay of the middle aisle is a stone with a socket for a reading-desk.



FIG. 54. CAPITAL FROM CHAPTER-HOUSE IN THE MUSEUM.

The most western bay on the north and south side was cut off by solid walls to form rooms, perhaps for books.

Cuts in the plinth which runs across the west wall internally seem to indicate that the central doorway had a wooden screen against it for the purpose of hanging a door.

The paving of the original floor lies under the turf. It consisted of small square tiles like those in the nave of the church.

B. THE PARLOUR—*Auditorium juxta capitulum*¹

To the south of the chapter-house is the parlour. This was the room in which the officers could discuss necessary questions with the monks, silence being the general rule in the cloister. The conversation was to be as brief as possible.²

The room, 27½ feet by 10½, was approached by an archway similar to the three to the north of it. It was not provided with a door. There are three bays longitudinally and the vaulting is much like that of the chapter-house. In the east wall is a doorway which had folding-doors secured by a wooden bar, the holes for which still remain. Notice here the red lines on the plaster.

C. THE DORMITORY—*Dormitorium*³

Immediately to the south of the parlour door is part of a blocked doorway (Fig. 49). This was the entrance to the day-stairs⁴ by which the

¹ This title—parlour next to the chapter-house—implies that there were other places in which talking was permitted. One was in the infirmary, as we saw on p. 50; another was near the doorway into the cloister from the cellarium (p. 105, note). *Auditorium* is from the Latin *audire*, to hear, while *parlour* is from the French *parler*, to speak.

² *Consuetudines*, lxxii.

³ The rules of behaviour in the dormitory are laid down very strictly in *Consuetudines*, lxxii.

⁴ The day-stairs still exist in this position at Cleeve.

monks went up to the first dormitory. When the dormitory was rebuilt after the fire, the staircase was placed in its present position, in the south-east corner of the cloister. The blocked doorway is partly destroyed by a new doorway opening into

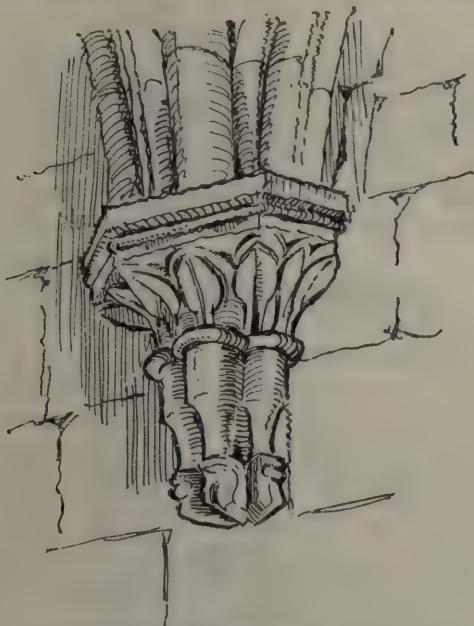


FIG. 55. CORBEL IN PARLOUR.

a long room (Fig. 56), 103 feet by 28, which now looks imposing with its row of six columns, but was nothing but a low dark basement beneath the dormitory.¹ It had originally a flat wooden ceiling, and was less than seven feet in height. After

¹ It was thought to be the warming-house, the warming-house to be the kitchen, and the kitchen to be the buttery, until Mr. Hope explained the real use of the rooms.

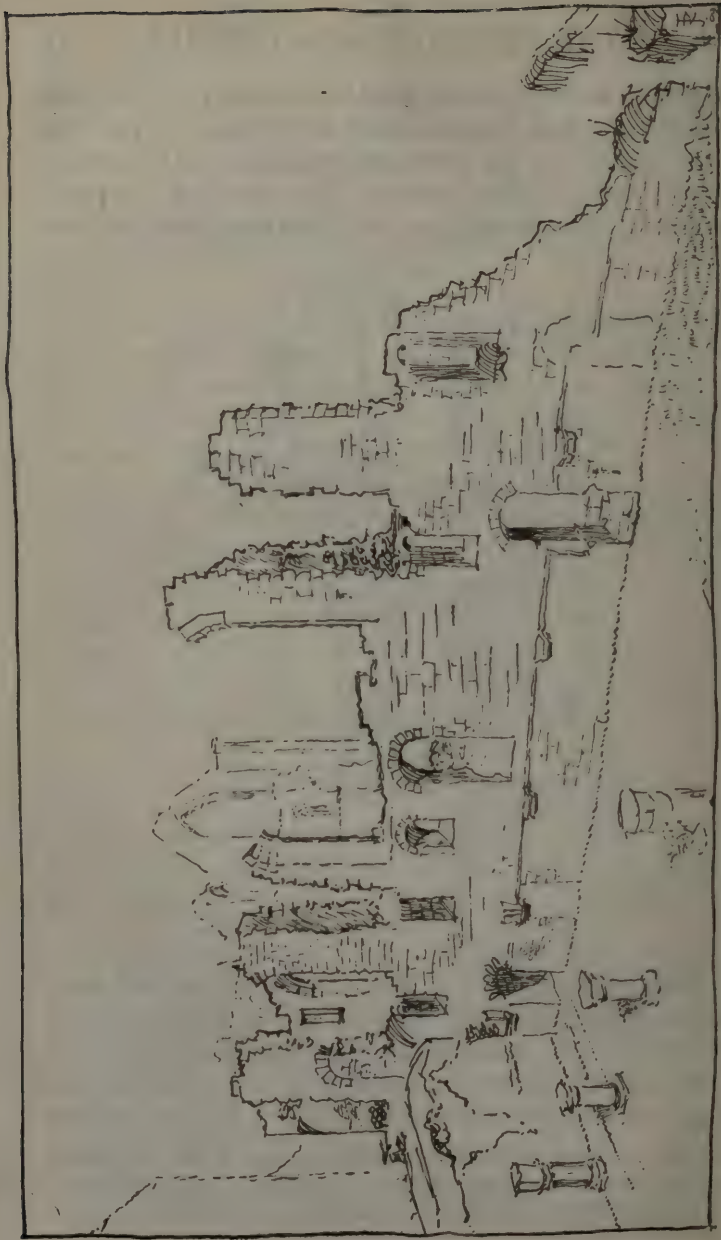


FIG. 56. EAST WALL OF DORMITORY FROM TOP OF DAY-STAIRS.

the fire the roof was raised and the room vaulted with stone, but it must have still remained almost dark, and could only have been used as a storehouse.

Much of the walling, not having been destroyed by the fire, was utilized in the rebuilding, and owing to the reconstruction presents many blocked openings.

The northern bay of the basement forms now the passage from the cloister to the infirmary, and was cut off from the rest of the building by a wall on the line of the first pier. When, before the fire, the day-stairs occupied this bay, the passage was further south,¹ and the two blocked doorways at each end of it can still be seen.

At the extreme north of the east end is a blocked window, which must have opened into a space beneath the original dormitory stairs (Fig. 57).

In the middle of the basement are two doorways opposite to each other, which are subsequent to the fire; they have been altered, but indicate a passage to the yard on the east side of the basement.

Over the west doorway is a window. The door gives access to two rooms, one on each side of it, under the day-stairs.

The doorway to the room on the north side is before the fire, and indicates a passage southwards from the cloister. The room itself, now used as a dark room, is low.

The room to the south, which has four steps up to it, is high and has a large recess in the west wall.

Both rooms are now quite dark, but originally there was the small window over the door, another to the south, as you will see directly, and a third on the south side of the day-stairs. The place was blocked up to give a base for the turret stair to room over museum.

¹ The two walls of the passage were on each side of the wall just mentioned as being on the line of the first pier.

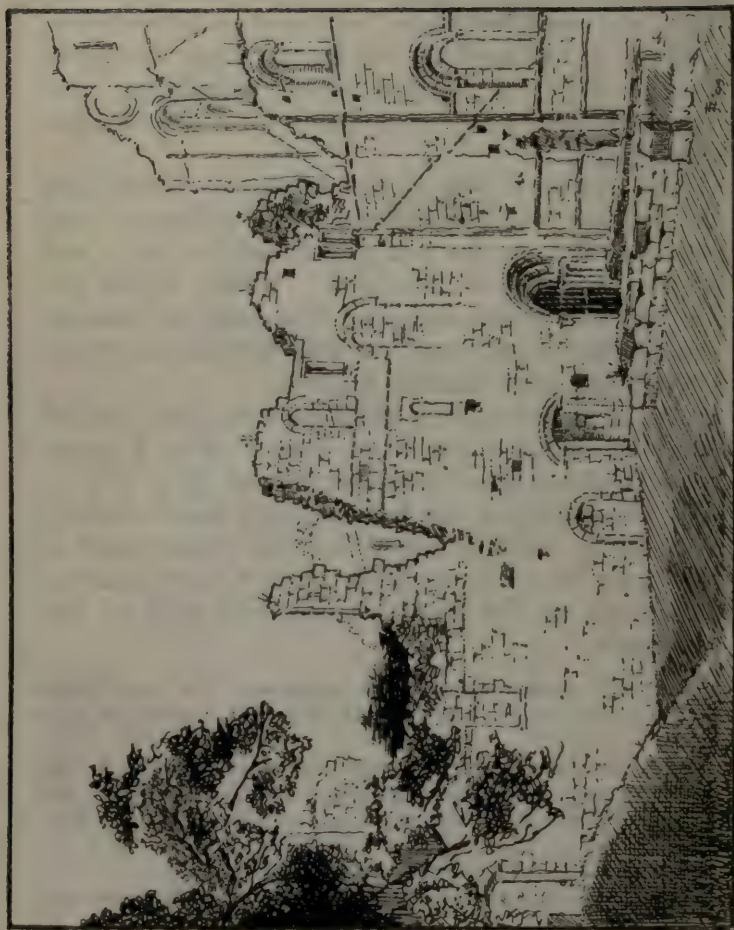


FIG. 57. EAST WALL OF DORMITORY FROM ABBOT'S CHAMBER.

Further south are two windows opposite to each other, both blocked, which are also subsequent to the fire.

A little south of each of these windows is a straight joint marking the part which was wholly rebuilt after the fire. Holes to the south of the joint perhaps indicate a wooden partition.

At the end of the east wall is a blocked doorway.

Go back now to the cloister and in the corner you see the day-stairs to the dormitory (Fig. 58). On the west wall are nine holes to fasten the hand-rail, which was $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the steps. The ceiling was a stone vault in four bays. The staircase must have been dark, as the only direct light came from the entrance archway, which had no door and one window¹ over it just above the cloister roof. Eight joist holes on the west wall show that there was some erection over the northern end of the staircase reached from the dormitory, which was two feet below it. At the top of the stairs there would have been three doorways opening from a landing. The one to the left led into the dormitory; the one to the right into rooms which will be described in connexion with the room below it. (Turn at once to p. 90 if you want to avoid remounting the stairs.) The doorway in front opened into a room which ran south by the side of the dormitory, and may have been the bedroom of the abbot or some other official.

In the south-west corner of the room was a gong; the bottom of its shaft can be seen below. To the east of this shaft are two corbels projecting $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the wall, which carried a gong in the south-west corner of the

¹ The window had a transom or cross-bar; the broken end of it can be seen on the west jamb.

dormitory. The river formerly ran up to the south end of the dormitory. You can look at these when you are inspecting the general sanitary arrangements of the hospital.

From the top of the stairs can be seen the whole length, 165 feet, of the dormitory, from the transept wall to the end of the basement-room (Fig. 59). It extended over the passage next to the transept, the chapter-house, the parlour, and the basement-room. Part of the building which was over the chapter-house must have been on a higher level than the rest on account of the difference of level which we saw on p. 72.

At the south-west corner of this part, viz. at the junction of the chapter-house and the east wall of the parlour, is the jamb¹ of a lofty arch with an attached shaft.

If you look up at the transept you see the line of the roof cutting across two windows (Fig. 60). You see also two openings into the roof from the circular staircase; the upper one, $5\frac{7}{12}$ feet by $1\frac{3}{4}$, was fitted with a door, the lower one, $4\frac{3}{4}$ by $2\frac{1}{12}$, was not.

The upper one seems to have led into an attic, the lower one was perhaps for inspection of the dormitory.

The two openings above them, one above and one below the roof, are loops in the staircase; the lower one has been much broken away. The small opening in the apex of the gable² is due to decay. The loop to the east is from the passage to the room over the transept chapels. The window in this room can be seen to the right a little higher up.

Lower down you see the archway into which the night-stairs from the church opened. On this

¹ Jamb (from *jambe*, a leg) is the side-post of a window, door, or chimney-piece.

² A gable is the triangular piece of wall at the end of a building with a ridged roof. The word may be connected with the German *gabel*, a fork, or the Greek *cephale*, a head.



FIG. 58. DAY STAIRS TO DORMITORY.
Taken from the staircase in wall of south transept.

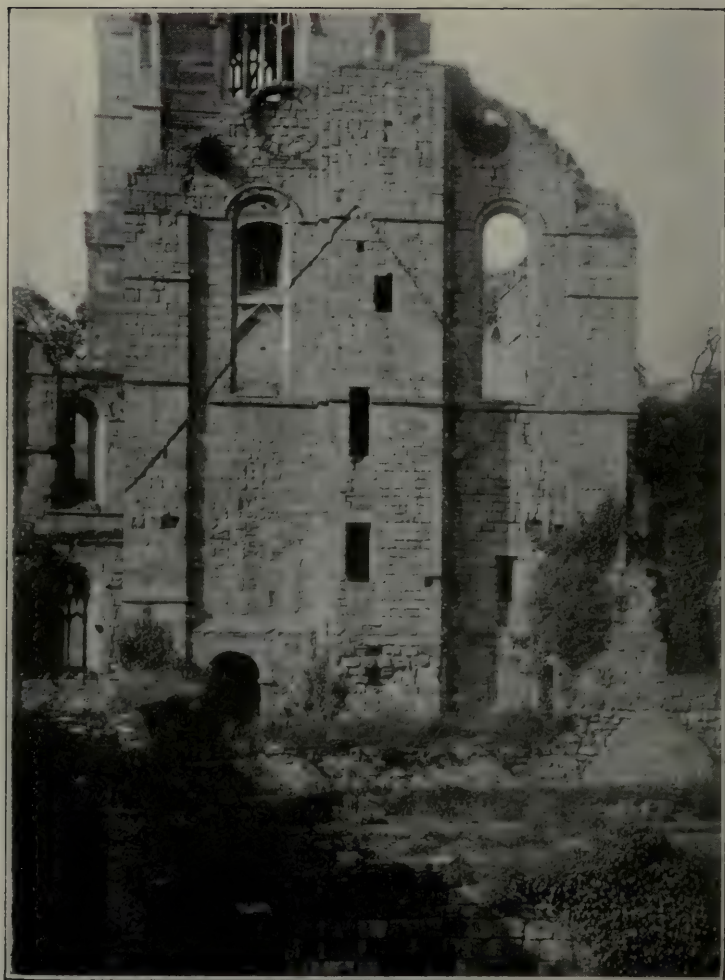
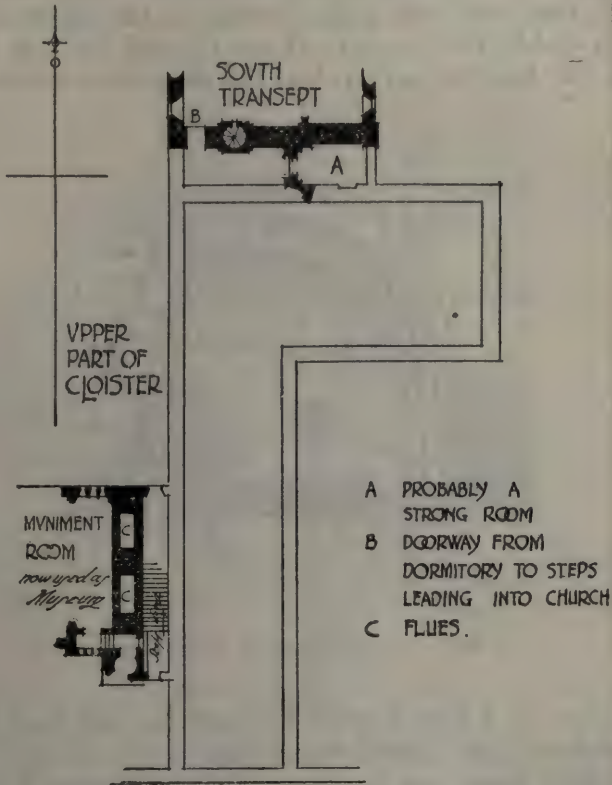


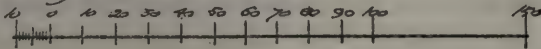
FIG. 60. SOUTH TRANSEPT WALL.

THE MONKS' DORMITORY.

(First Floor Plan)



Scale of Feet



7.09

FIG. 59.

side it opened into a lobby, which has in its west wall a wide recess low down. On the east side of it is a doorway, inserted in a built-up arch, which opens into a room. This room, which had a window in the east wall and a recess in the south, was probably the treasury (Figs. 61 and 62). It had a low lean-to roof to clear the dormitory windows.



FIG. 61. RECESS IN TREASURY.

Later on a barrel vault was put in, and then the archway was turned into a door.

You must now go down into the chapter-house and the basement-room to see the windows of the dormitory. In the raised part of the dormitory over the chapter-house there were four windows on the north side, three on the east, and four on the south. In the south wall, between the first window and the east end, is the doorway which

opened into the bridge noted on p. 64. The second window has been altered. Between the second and third a small window has been inserted. In the angle, just to the west of where the fourth window was, there is a small window and another close



FIG. 62. DOORWAY FROM LOBBY TO TREASURY.

to it. To the south of the latter is a blocked archway, which was for some temporary use during the rebuilding after the fire. Next to this come a small square-headed and a large round-headed window, and these were probably repeated alternately to the end of the building.

On a lower level than these windows are the windows of the old dormitory. They are $3\frac{5}{6}$ feet by $1\frac{1}{2}$; the external heads are cut out of a single stone. As they were six feet above the level of the floor, the old dormitory must have been a very gloomy room. There are remains of four windows, and between the third and fourth are a doorway and a little opening which went through the wall and was probably intended for a lamp to light the rooms on each side of it.¹ The doorway opened into the sanitary block of the old dormitory.

D. THE RERE-DORTER OR SANITARY BLOCK— *Dormitorii necessaria*

Go now to the south end of the basement-room and look at the sanitary arrangements of the dormitory,² noting first the two gongs mentioned on p. 81.

The block, 92 feet long, was at right angles to the dormitory, the south wall of the two buildings being continuous. There was a doorway into it from the south end of the dormitory, and perhaps a lamp niche at the side, as in the old rere-dorter. The whole of the upper story is destroyed, but it consisted of a row of gongs which were partitioned off and which were provided every morning with clean hay.

Looking at the basement of the rere-dorter you see that it is divided by a thick wall into two parts, one 18 feet wide, the other $5\frac{1}{2}$. The wider part formed a room which was vaulted in five bays. It

¹ There was always to be a light burning in the dormitory as well as in the church. *Consuetudines*, cxiii.

² Regulations are in *Consuetudines*, lxxii.

had a doorway into it from the basement-room of the dormitory, and in its north wall a fireplace, a blocked doorway, and a window. The two eastern bays were cut off by Huby to enlarge the abbot's chambers (p. 64), and there was a partition 24 feet from its western end. This room was perhaps for the use of novices.¹

The narrow part of the building was the drain. Looking at its outside wall you see at the west end an oblique arch, which was probably the way in which water was conveyed into the drain of the old rere-dorter, and next the bases of a series of four arches through which the stream, then wider than it is now (Fig. 48), flowed into the drain. At the east end of the drain is a wide arch supported by a buttress to the south. There are two blocked archways in the south-east corner of the room next to the drain, which seem to show that there was a water-course underneath this corner, perhaps to serve a gong in the room. At the time these were blocked the easternmost of the four arches on the south was blocked. Against this arch was built subsequently a long arm, half across the stream, to throw the water better into the drain.

To the north of the rere-dorter are some remains of that of the first dormitory. The lower part of the south wall can still be seen running from the dormitory to the abbot's chambers. Five feet north of this was the wall of the drain, the arch of the drain still existing at its east end, and $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet further north was the north wall of the building, the junction of which with the abbot's chambers being still visible. The doorway from the dormitory and the lamp niche at its side have been already noted.

¹ A similar room at Pontigny seems to have been used by them.

The proper flushing of this drain must have been difficult, as it required a conduit of 50 feet in length to take the water from the river through the oblique arch mentioned above. But the drain seems to have been left to serve the gongs in the prison after its main use was gone.

After the destruction of the old rere-dorter, a pentice, 10 feet in width, was built from its south wall right up to the chapter-house against the dormitory wall. It had a flat ceiling and was covered by a steep roof, the rake of which can be seen against the chapter-house wall (Fig. 57). You can see also the two rows of corbels which supported ceiling and roof.

There are marks in the wall as if originally the pentice had been lower.

E. THE WARMING-HOUSE—*Calefactorium*¹

To the west of the day-stairs to the dormitory is an arched recess, once provided with a door, which Mr. Hope suggests may have been a towel closet. Next to it is the doorway to the warming-house (Figs. 63 and 66). This was the room to which the monks resorted to warm themselves² at the common fire which was lit on All Saints' Day, Nov. 1, and was kept burning until Easter. It was used by the infirmarian for the quarterly bleeding of the monks (p. 49), and also for the shaving of the sick, the healthy monks being shaved whilst sitting in a row in the cloister and singing psalms.³

The warming-house, 38 feet by 23, is vaulted in stone with a massive pillar in the centre. On the

¹ From *calor*, warmth.

² The regulations are in *Consuetudines*, lxxii.

³ Gasquet, pp. 33, 88, 104.

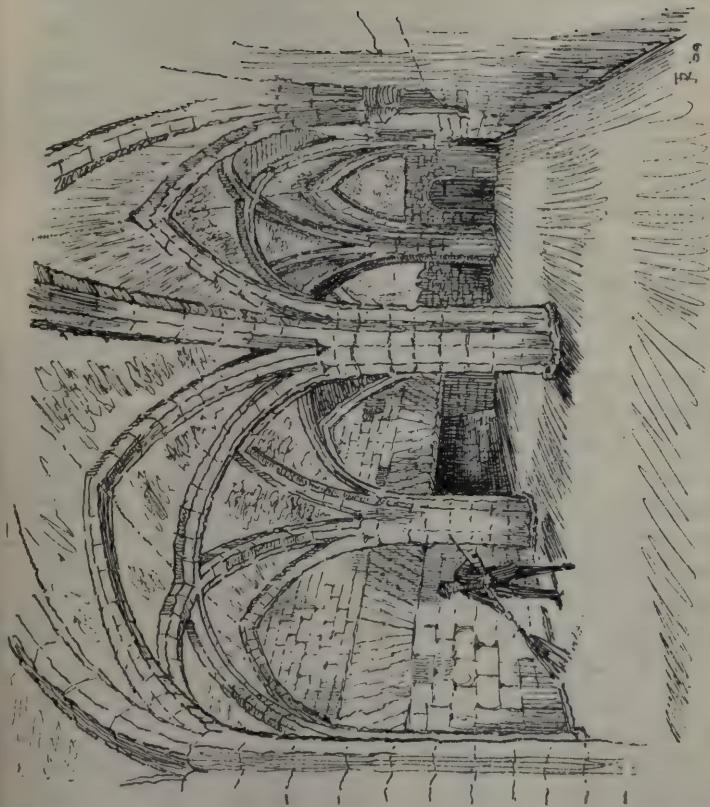


FIG. 63. WARMING-HOUSE.

east wall are two great fireplaces, with lintels formed of twenty-one large joggled stones ;¹ each occupies the whole width of a bay. The northern one has been blocked, probably owing to the diminished number of monks in later days, and its chimney has fallen or been taken down. In the west wall are two openings² which seem to have been made for the purpose of warming the refectory. In the north-west corner is a hole for a pipe from the lavatory. On the south side are two windows, both rebated for frames. Beneath the western one is a doorway leading into a courtyard, which you must go round to the back to see.

On the east side of the yard is the basement below the room which, as was suggested on p. 81, may have been the abbot's bedroom. This basement, 29 feet by 14, was vaulted in stone and divided into two bays ; it was doubtless the fuel-house. Its south wall was a continuation of the south wall of the dormitory, and was further continued to the refectory, forming a boundary wall to the river, which came up as far originally. On the west side was a pentice, and from where it ended at the south wall was, according to Mr. Hope, a plank bridge over the stream to the angle of the refectory, continued over the rest of the stream to the south bank.

You must now return up the day-stairs to look at the rooms above the warming-house. At the head of the stairs (Fig. 58) is an archway to the right, opening into a lobby with a round barrel vault.

¹ So jointed as to be unable to slide on one another. The word is connected with *jog*, to shake.

² Beneath these is a plinth which runs the whole length of the sides of the refectory.

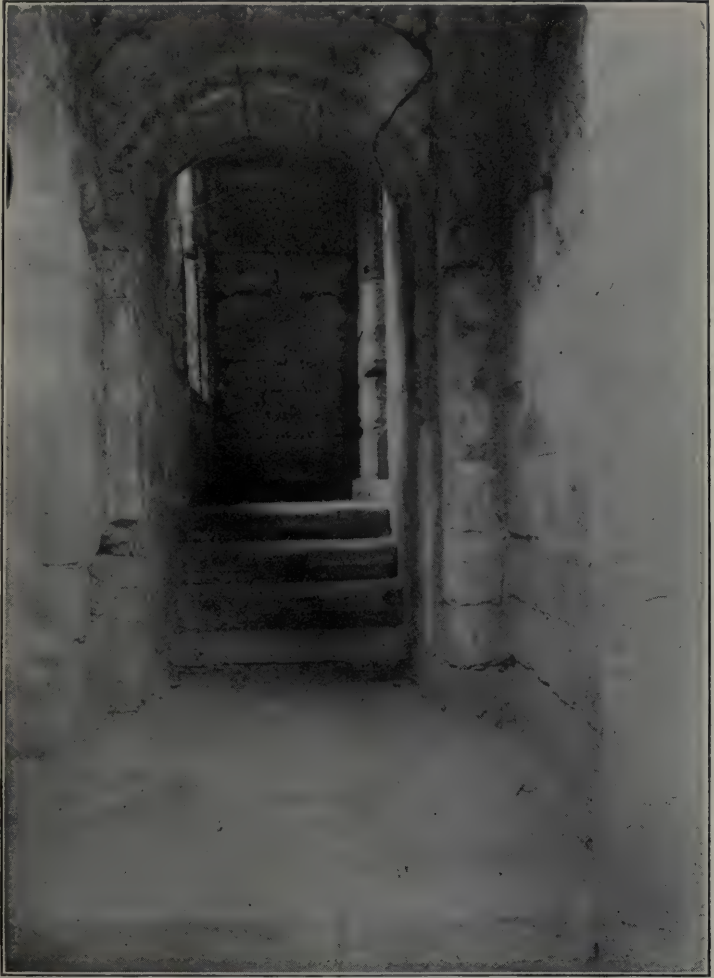


FIG. 64. STAIRS TO MUNIMENT ROOM.

In this is a doorway to the south leading to a circular staircase, and another doorway to the west, which could be secured on the inside by a swinging bar. There are four stairs (Fig. 64) from



FIG. 65. ROOM OVER MUNIMENT ROOM.

this latter door to a passage with a pointed barrel roof, which has a triple lancet window on the south and a doorway, with double doors and an inside bar, to the north. This opens with a step to the room over the warming-house. The room is vaulted like the latter, with a central pillar, and has two triple lancets in the north wall and a double lancet in the south. These windows were fur-

nished with iron stanchions and saddle-bars,¹ which favour the theory that the room was used as a muniment room.² The bars to the doors would prevent any one coming in while documents were signed or examined.

Monasteries were used as banks where money and title-deeds could be safely left. *Nomasticon Cisterciense*, p. 347.

The room above this, reached by the circular staircase, is almost destroyed. On the north were two windows with sills almost level with the floor. On the south is a deep recess, eight feet wide, lighted by a small square-headed window (Figs. 58 and 65), and west of this is a doorway which has a projecting ledge outside, six inches below the level of the floor. Mr. Reeve suggests that there was hauling tackle here to bring up stores to this room, which must have been dry on account of the two warming-house flues which passed up in the east wall. More probably the room was for a last defence in case of attack.

In 1423 some of the household of the Earl of Northumberland broke into the monastery and robbed it. They also released a monk named William Esteby, who was imprisoned for theft and other crimes. *Memorials of Fountains*, i. 420.

The roof covered both the warming-house and the dormitory staircase. You can see its line both on the north and south sides of the chimney, and within the cloister against the buttress which

¹ Stanchion (*stare*, to stand) is an upright bar of iron; saddle-bar (from the same root as the word 'sit') is a horizontal bar of iron.

² Muniment is a document in defence of rights. It is from the Latin *munire*, to defend.

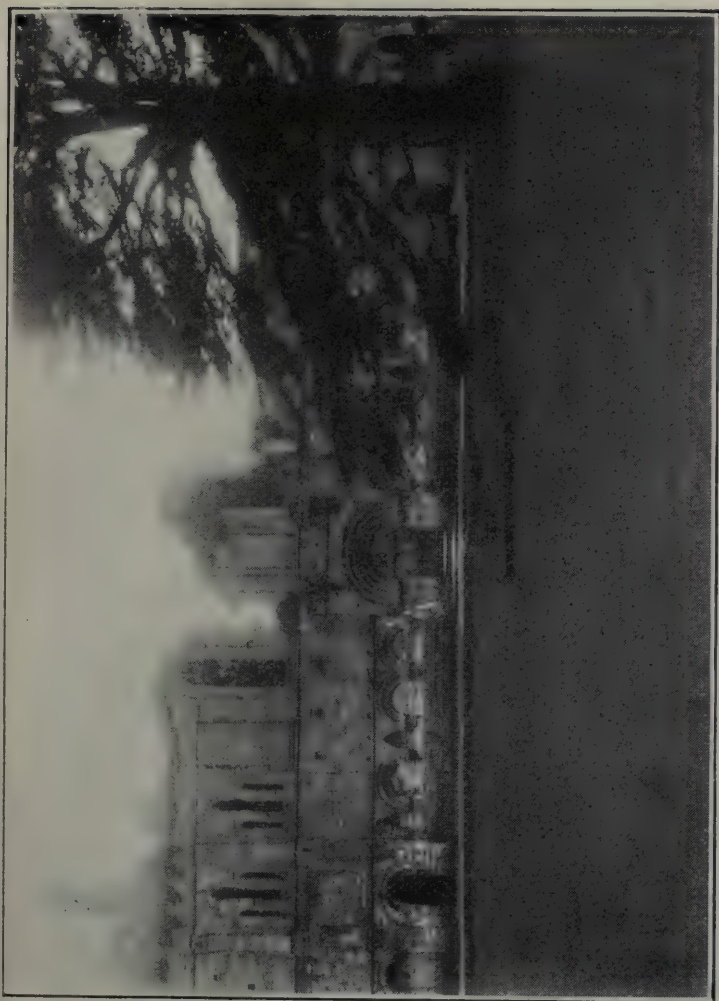


FIG. 66. SOUTH SIDE OF CLOISTER.

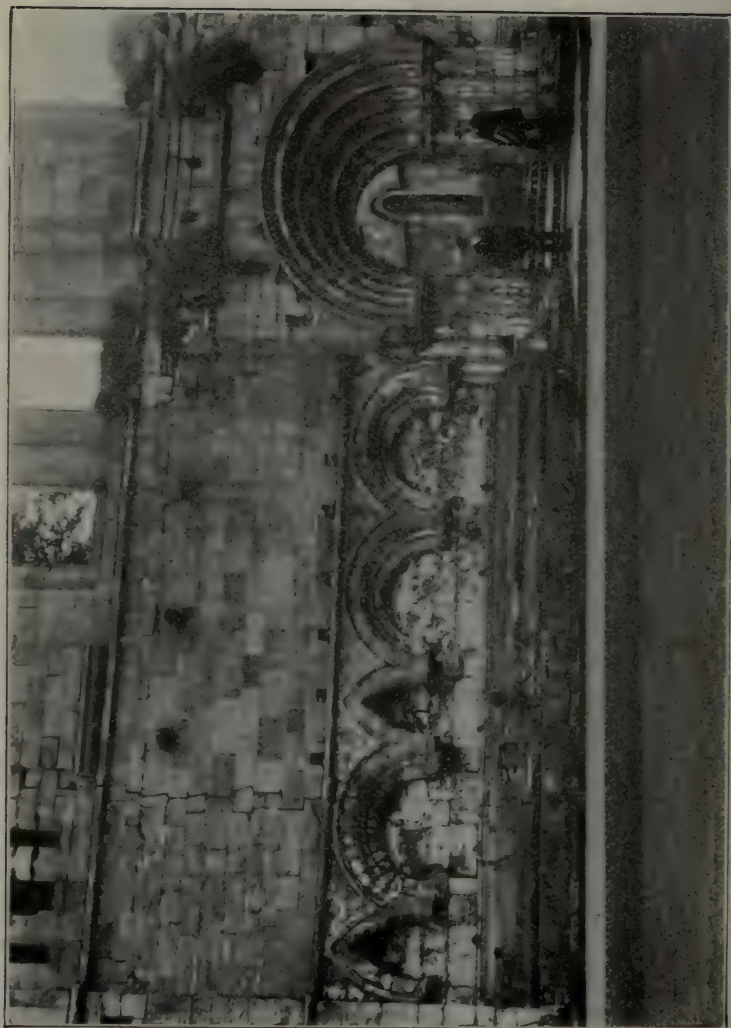


FIG. 67. REFECTORY DOOR.

marked the division between the warming-house and the refectory you can see the beginning of the corbel-table. At a later period the roof seems to have been lowered.

Notice the irregularity of the buttress in the upper and lower part of the north wall (Fig. 58), though this would not have been seen when the cloister still had its roof. Notice, too, that the western face of both the upper and lower buttresses are in line, and the face of the upper and thinner part of the wall carried down to the ground, so as to form a well-marked projection against which to stop the lavatory (Fig. 66). Reeve, p. 31.

F. THE LAVATORY—*Lavatorium*.

The lavatory¹ was situated on both sides of the refectory door (Figs. 66 and 67), a useful position since forks were unknown, and the monks had to supplement spoons with fingers. The east side was 29 feet long, the west 32½, a difference in length which causes a lack of symmetry in the arches. The arches were carried on marble pillars standing on a broad bench on which the monks sat every Saturday for the ceremonial foot-washing. The trough below was supplied with water from pipes in the middle on each side, coming up through the benches, and having branches into the corners of the refectory. On the east side there was also a branch into the warming-house. The trough was about a semicircle of one foot in diameter, as can be seen from its mark against the west side of the refectory door.

The lavatory was under the charge of the monks

¹ *Lavare*, to wash.

who were doing their week of service as assistants in the kitchen. Every Saturday evening, as the monks sat on the stone bench, the senior assistant washed their feet, beginning with those of the abbot, while the junior followed and dried them with a towel.¹

G. THE REFECTORY OR FRATER²—*Refectorium*

The refectory (Fig. 68), 105 feet by 45, stands north and south, which was the usual position in Cistercian abbeys. It has been suggested that this peculiarity was due to the arrangement by which the monks took it in turn to be cooks for a week instead of employing paid servants, and the wish therefore to emphasize the connexion of the kitchen with the cloister. But the refectory with the Cluniac monks, who had the same arrangement, stood east and west.

Of late years, owing to the researches of Mr. Harold Brakspear and Mr. Hope,³ it has been thought that the early refectories stood east and west, and that it was not until about 1150 that the change was made. In 1904 Mr. Hope tested the theory here, and discovered the foundations of the south wall of the first refectory 25 $\frac{5}{8}$ feet from the present north wall. The wall runs through the kitchen, and a fragment of its junction with the west wall still remains.

The refectory was divided into two aisles by

¹ *Consuetudines*, cviii.

² These two words, meaning dining-room, both come from the Latin *reficere*, to restore, refresh. The shorter word has no connexion with the Latin *frater*, a brother.

³ *Kirkstall Abbey*, by Hope and Bilson, pp. 52, 53.

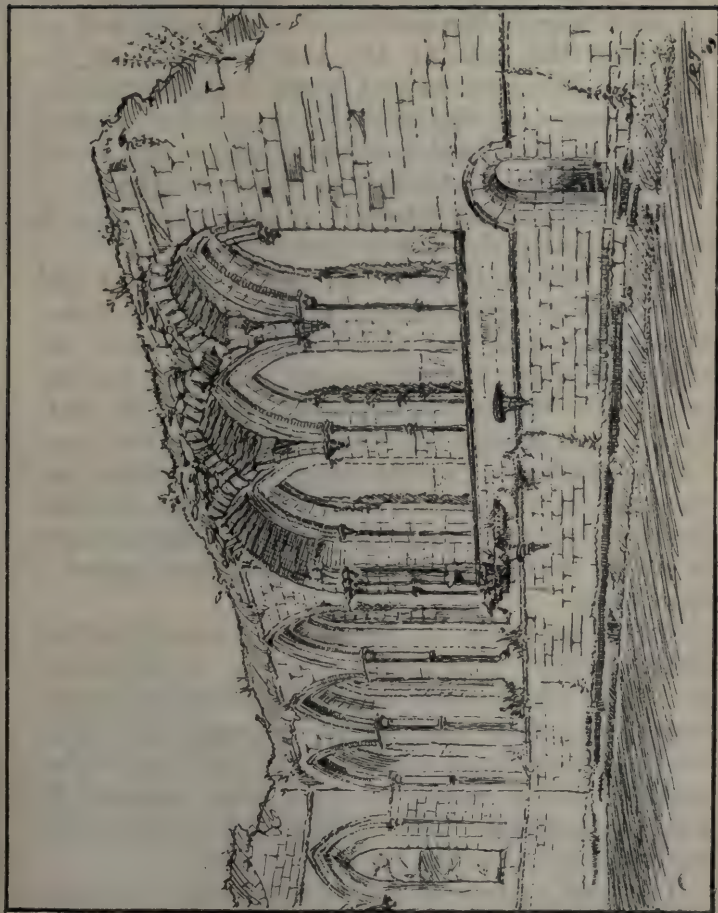


FIG. 68. REFECTORY.

five arches carried on four round marble pillars. You can see the corbels which supported the arches in the centre of the north and south walls, and on the floor the base of the southernmost of the pillars. The roof was of wood, high-pitched, in two spans, and was probably lowered at a later period, as the circular windows above the lancet windows in the south wall have been blocked.

The south of the refectory is built upon an arch through which the stream formerly ran.

Along the south wall and part of the east and west walls is a platform on which stood the dining tables. On the end platform was the table for the prior,¹ and over his seat are pin-holes showing where the crucifix was fastened. On the side platforms, each divided into two by a passage, were four tables which stood on stone supports, of which you can still see the remains. The monks sat on stone benches with their backs to the wall. The platform is longer on the west side, and perhaps carried a sideboard.

On the west side was the pulpit, a recess five feet deep, reached by a flight of steps. It is carried on arches which stood on marble shafts, and these again on corbels fixed in the parapet wall. The wall has been much repaired, and only one corbel remains which seems to have been inserted in a wrong position. The reading-desk stood on the very fine corbel to the south (Fig. 69).

The food and meal times have been mentioned on p. 4. The two dishes of vegetables were

¹ The prior was the official next in rank to the abbot. The abbot himself had to dine in the guest-house, and if there were no guests had to invite two at least of the monks to share his table. *Consuetudines*, cx.

served as two separate courses. While the monks were eating, one of them read aloud from the pulpit. You can still see the bookcase from which he took his book, just inside the doorway to the staircase. He was ordered to keep his ears open, so as to catch any correction which the prior might make in the reading. The reader and the monks who waited at table took their dinner after the rest, but were allowed a little refreshment before



FIG. 69. CORBEL OF PULPIT.

the regular meal began. Grace was, of course, sung before dinner; at the conclusion grace was begun in the refectory and finished in the church, the monks walking there in procession as they chanted the 51st Psalm.¹

In the north end of the west wall is a doorway which contained a circular turnstile on which the food was delivered from the kitchen.

In the north-east and north-west corners are holes for water-pipes from the lavatory.

¹ *Consuetudines*, lxxvi, cvi.

H. THE KITCHEN—*Coquina*.¹

The kitchen (Fig. 70), as was mentioned on p. 77, was always thought to be a buttery, and the warming-house to be the kitchen, until Mr. Hope made his survey in 1888.



FIG. 70. KITCHEN.

It was divided into two rooms by two great fireplaces which stood back to back, and by two vaulted passages on each side of them, which carried the thrust to the east and west walls. The west passage has perished, only the springers

¹ From *coquere*, to cook; kitchen comes from the same word.



FIG. 71. RESTORATION OF KITCHEN.

in the wall remaining, but the east one is perfect, though modern buttresses have been built on the west to support its vault. At some later period it has been turned into a closet by building a wall in its south end. Over the passages were two arches springing from the east and west walls, where the incisions for them can be seen, to the upper part of the central block which carried up the flues.

The north half of the building was vaulted with three bays. It had the door to the cloister, the door to the refectory, and a door or hatch in the west wall into the refectory of the lay-brethren. It was lit by three windows placed high to clear the cloister roof. In the north wall are three small recesses. A restoration of this half of the kitchen is given in Fig. 71.

The south half was vaulted with two bays.¹ In its south wall are a blocked archway which was once perhaps a cupboard,² a recess, and a door, and above these two windows. It seems to have been divided into two stories by a wooden floor, and on the westernmost bay of the north half there seems to have been a similar floor. These floors would have been for stores and reached by ladders, but they must have made the south half of the kitchen very dark, even if the upper part of the blocked archway was left open, as suggested by Mr. Reeve.

Notice in the west wall the junction with the wall of the first refectory, mentioned on p. 94.

¹ This vault was a later insertion, as can be seen from the space for the ribs being cut out of the walls. The first vaulting was three feet lower than the second.

² Mr. Reeve thinks the top of the archway was open, and the lower part filled with boards let into vertical grooves in the jambs.

Over the kitchen vault were rooms which must have been reached from the dormitory of the lay-brethren. Nothing remains of them but the jambs of three windows in the south wall.








To the south of the kitchen was a yard. On its north side was a pentice with a steep roof sloped down on the west to avoid a window. On the east side was another pentice which led to a wooden bridge corresponding to the one described on p. 90. At the east end of the south wall is a shoot into the river, which was perhaps for a gong; it can be seen only on the outside.

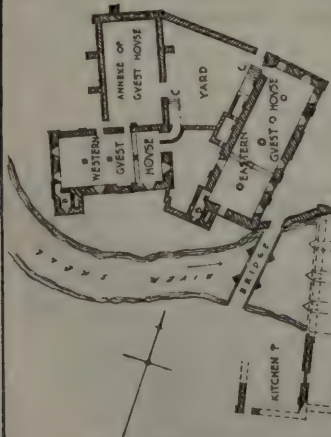
The cooks for the week, the abbot's cooks, and the infirmarian were the only monks allowed to enter the kitchen. If there were no fire in the warming-house, the precentor might go in for the purpose of smoothing his wax tablet (p. 69), drying parchment, &c., and the sacristan to get a light for the church or incense. The latter was also permitted to fetch salt on Sundays for the holy water.¹

¹ *Consuetudines*, lxxii.

PLAN OF CELLARIVM AND GUEST HOUSES

REFERENCE

-  NORMAN — before year of 1147
-  — immediately after year
-  13 CENTURY
-  14 "
-  15 "
-  15 " (John Dugdale 1479-1489)
-  15 " (Normanville Abbey 1494-1524)



- A CELLARER'S OFFICE
- B GONG
- C OUTSIDE STAIRCASE TO FIRST FLOOR
- D DAY STAIRS TO LAY BROTHERS' DORMITORY
- E NIGHT STAIRS TO DITTO

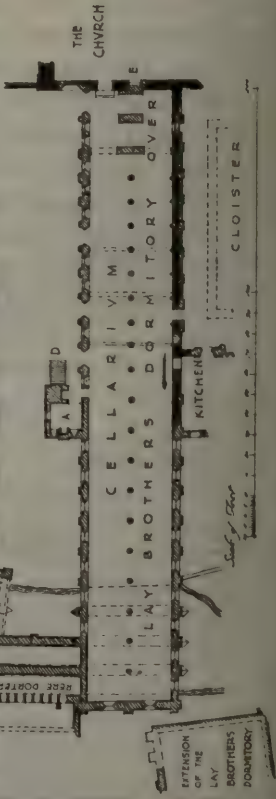
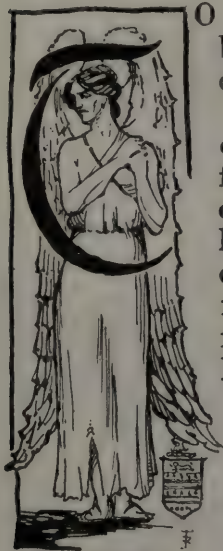


FIG. 72.

CHAPTER IV

BUILDINGS UNDER THE CARE OF THE CELLARER



O the west of the cloister are buildings which were under the care of the cellarer¹ (Fig. 72).

The cellarer was an important official who provided all the food for the community, had control over the outlying farms, looked after the guests, and had charge of all the servants. We might call him the general manager of the establishment.²

In the early days of the monastery the rough work and the work on the distant farms was done by lay-brethren or *conversi*,³ who were directly under the care of the cellarer, and we find that the cellarer's

buildings were largely for their use.

¹ The words cellar and cell are both from the Latin *celare*, to hide or conceal.

² The rule of St. Benedict, cap. xxxi, says: 'Let him have the charge of everything' (*curam gerat de omnibus*). Jocelyn of Brakeland called him the second father of the monastery (*Quia secundus pater est in monasterio*). Lest he should help himself too freely, the rule of St. Benedict advised that the monk chosen to be cellarer shall not be a great eater (*non multum edax*).

³ For a brief description of these see p. 6.

A. THE CELLARIUM.

Close to the kitchen door is the entrance to a long low stone-vaulted room which is called in the Cistercian statutes the cellarium (Fig. 73).

In some Cistercian monasteries, e.g. Citeaux, Clairvaux, Kirkstall, Byland, a lane ran between the cloister and cellarium, the object of which is not known. Mr. Reeve thinks that there was a lane at Fountains, but what he took to be its remains seems, as explained by Mr. Hope, to be rather remains of the first cellarium.

This was of much smaller dimensions than the present one. Its east wall was the existing east wall of the first thirteen bays, which is anterior to the fire. The foundation of the west wall has been found $24\frac{2}{3}$ feet from it. We noticed traces of the building in the church (p. 36), and shall see more later on.

The present cellarium, 302 feet by $41\frac{1}{2}$, is divided down the centre by a row of arches supported on columns. Longitudinally it is divided into 22 bays, the 11 southern bays being rather larger than the 11 northern. Originally it was divided into separate parts, but the cross-walls have been removed to form a view. Divisions are shown in Burton's¹ plan, which was published in 1758.

The greater part of the eleven northern bays was built directly after the fire, the east wall, as we have seen, being anterior to that event. The windows of this portion are round-headed. The eleven southern bays are of a little later date, and the windows pointed.

The first two bays were cut off by a wall. This part contains two arches which carry the night-

¹ *Monasticon Eboracense*, by John Burton, M.D.

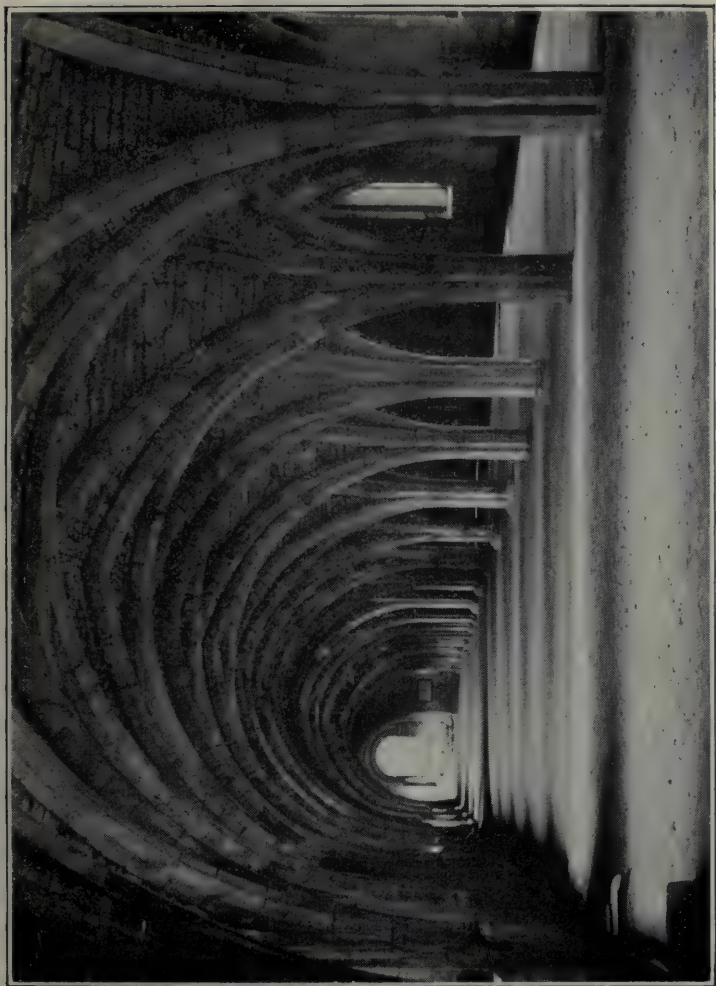


FIG. 73. THE CELLARIUM.



FIG. 74. WEST VIEW OF CHURCH AND CELLARIUM.

stairs from the church to the dormitory above. The east wall has in the first bay the remains of a doorway from the cloister, early blocked and replaced by one in the second bay, which was afterwards blocked. The north wall has a doorway into the church. The west wall has a doorway in the first bay, and had two windows in the second, but one of them has been converted into a door, as can be seen in Fig. 74.

The next four bays were cut off by another wall. The west side of this portion has a wide doorway in the sixth bay, which was fitted with a bar.

According to Burton's plan there was a wall with an opening in it towards the east which cut off the next two bays.

These three rooms were probably used for stores.

The ninth bay¹ has doorways in both east and west walls forming the entry from the outer court into the cloister. The tenth bay has in its east wall a blocked recess for the porters, with the loop in its back mentioned on p. 68.

The last twelve bays formed probably the refectory for the lay-brothers. The seats arranged along the walls would account for the absence of the string-course which runs below the windows in the south wall and starts to run in the east and west walls.

There are signs of this string-course having run round the building. It is chamfered² at the south end, but in the twelfth bay is a roll.

¹ Mr. Hope suggests that the ninth and tenth bays formed the parlour near the kitchen (*auditorium juxta coquinam*), *Consuetudines*, cxvii.

² To chamfer (*cantum frangere*, break the edge) is to cut away a square edge so as to replace it by a flat surface.

In the eleventh bay is a blocked opening through which the food was served from the kitchen. There is a recess below the opening, the use of which is not clear.

In the west wall of the eleventh bay is a doorway which was fitted with a bar. In the twelfth bay is a low doorway which was originally two recesses, back to back, separated by a thin slab, with sills three feet from the floor.

In the south end the eastern of the two windows has been converted into a doorway, perhaps for convenience of access to the rere-dorter on the west, but the alteration may be subsequent to the suppression of the abbey.

Notice a difference in the vaulting of the bays. From the third to the ninth bays the vault rests on corbels in the west wall, and on shafts in the east; there are no wall-ribs on the west side, and on the east are more in the form of arches to take the weight. From the tenth bay to the end the vault rests on corbels on both walls and there are wall-ribs. There are small differences in the vaulting of the tenth and eleventh bays, and in the eighth pillar from the north end, which indicate that these were the last built, joining the two main sections.

There is some slight ornament on the most southern of the pillars and corbels just below the springing of the vault (Fig. 75).

Go now outside, and in the middle of the east wall you will see the day-stairs to the dormitory of the lay-brothers (Fig. 76). Between the stairs and the wall is a narrow passage opening into a lobby, which has on its east side the converted doorway mentioned above, on its west a round-

headed recess, which once had a wooden shelf, and on its south a doorway into a room which was perhaps the cellarer's office (Fig. 77). It is peculiarly vaulted, and has on the west a window, and on the south two narrow windows, and between them a fireplace with a projecting hood.

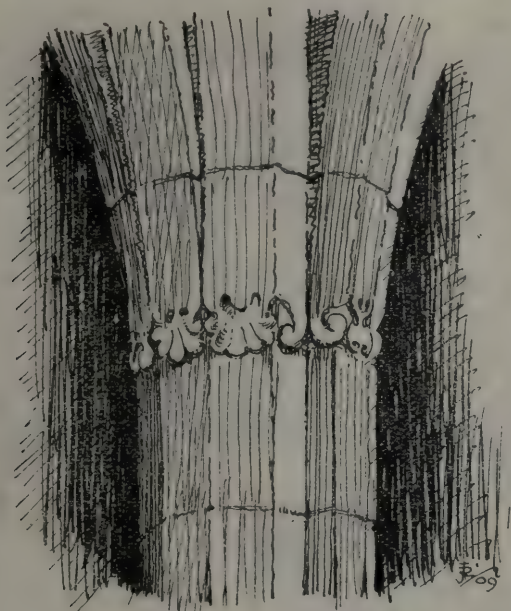


FIG. 75. SOUTHERNMOST PILLAR OF CELLARIUM.

The day-stairs lead first to a lobby¹ which had two windows to the west and one to the south, and then turn east to the dormitory. By the side of the south window is the flue from the room below.

¹ The marks of the gable roofs here seem to indicate that the original structure was of wood.

A pentice,¹ about thirteen feet wide, ran along the northern half of the cellarium as far as the blocked doorway into the church. This doorway was inserted after the fire, and was blocked by



FIG. 77. CELLARER'S OFFICE.

Darnton. Another pentice ran along the west wall of the cellarer's office, and was continued to the lay-brothers' infirmary.

¹ For details of this pentice see Hope, p. 112, and Reeve, pp. 18, 36.

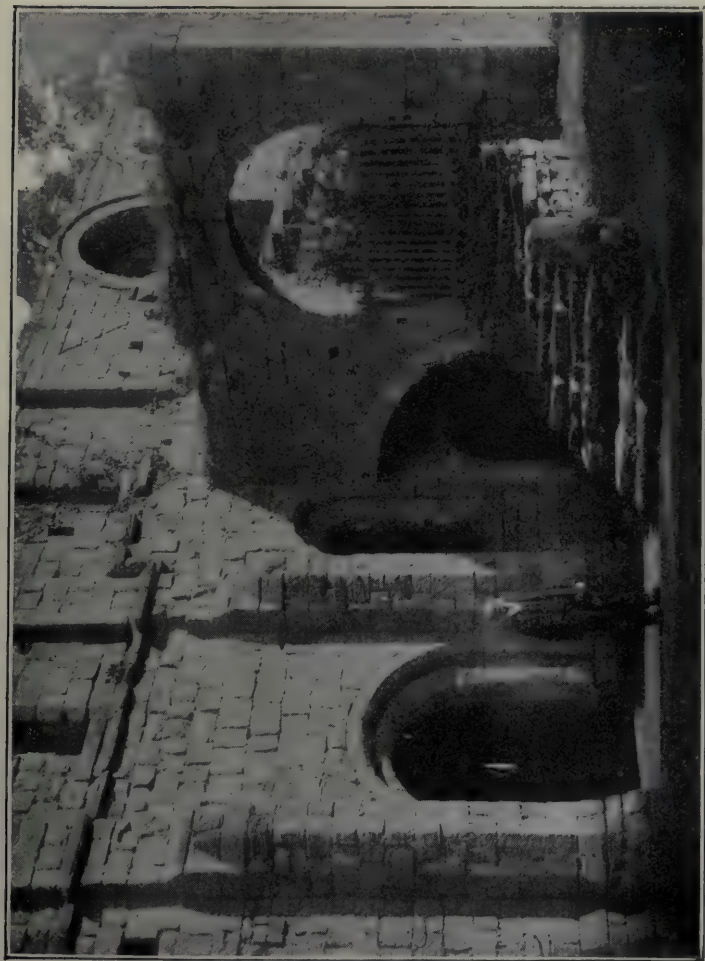


FIG. 76. DAY STAIRS TO DORMITORY OF THE LAY-BROTHERS.

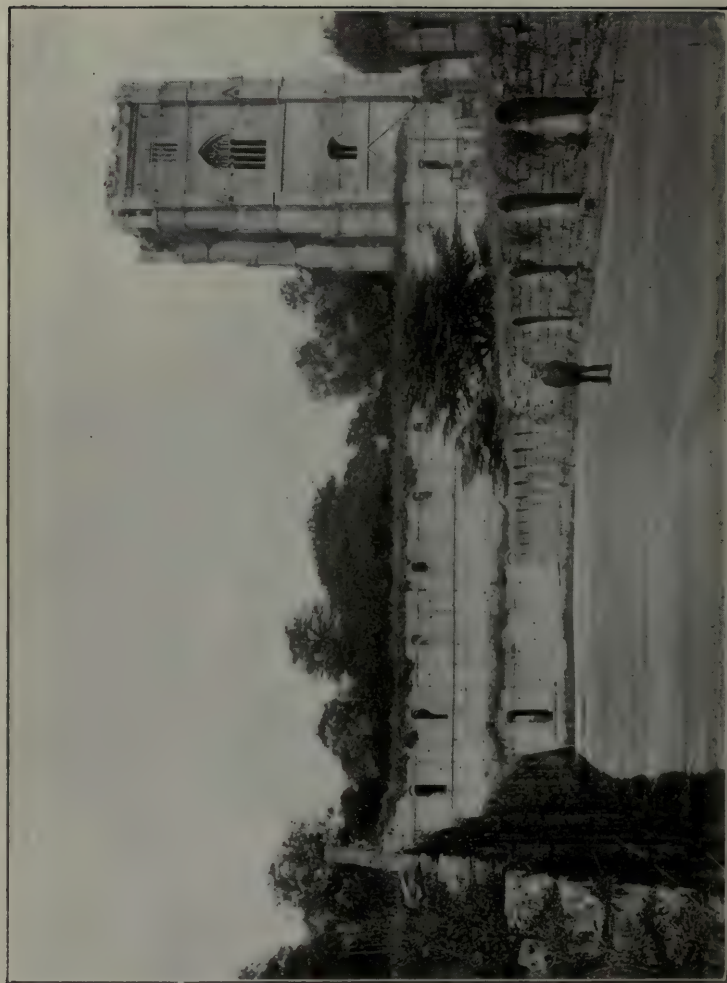


FIG. 78. DORMITORY OF THE LAY-BROTHERS.

B. THE DORMITORY OF THE LAY-BROTHERS—
Dormitorium conversorum.

Unless you are privileged to ascend the stairs you must look at the dormitory of the lay-brothers, which occupied the whole of the upper floor of the cellarium, from the hill to the south.



FIG. 79. LAMP NICHE AND WINDOW IN LAY-BROTHERS' DORMITORY.

If you are privileged, you will see that the north end covers three of the church buttresses (Fig. 78). Just to the west of the middle one are signs of the bond of a wall, and there are remains of the wall

itself below at the side of the night-stairs ;¹ this was the west wall of the old cellarium mentioned on p. 104. The string-course running below the windows is cut off where the building came against the church.

The dormitory had a wooden roof and was sloped back from the aisle wall.

Between the dormitory windows are holes for fixing the partitions between the cubicles. There is a recess in the west wall between the north end and the first window, another between the fifth and sixth windows (Fig. 79), and a third, just to the north of the day-stairs, which was fitted with shelves. The first two were probably for lamps. In the east wall there is a blocked recess close to the south end. At the east end of the south wall is a wide doorway (Fig. 98) which must have communicated by means of a wooden bridge with a building on the other side of the stream, of which only fragments remain. It may have been an extension of the dormitory. At the south end of the west wall was a doorway opening into the sanitary block, which stands at right angles to the dormitory and covers the last two bays.

C. THE RERE-DORTER OF THE LAY-BROTHERS— *Dormitorii necessaria conversorum*

Unless you have been allowed to go up to the dormitory, you must look at the rere-dorter of the lay-brothers first from the cellarium through the holes knocked in the west wall, and then from the other side of the stream.

¹ This can be seen from the inside of the church.



FIG. 80. RERE-DORTER OF THE LAY-BROTHERS.

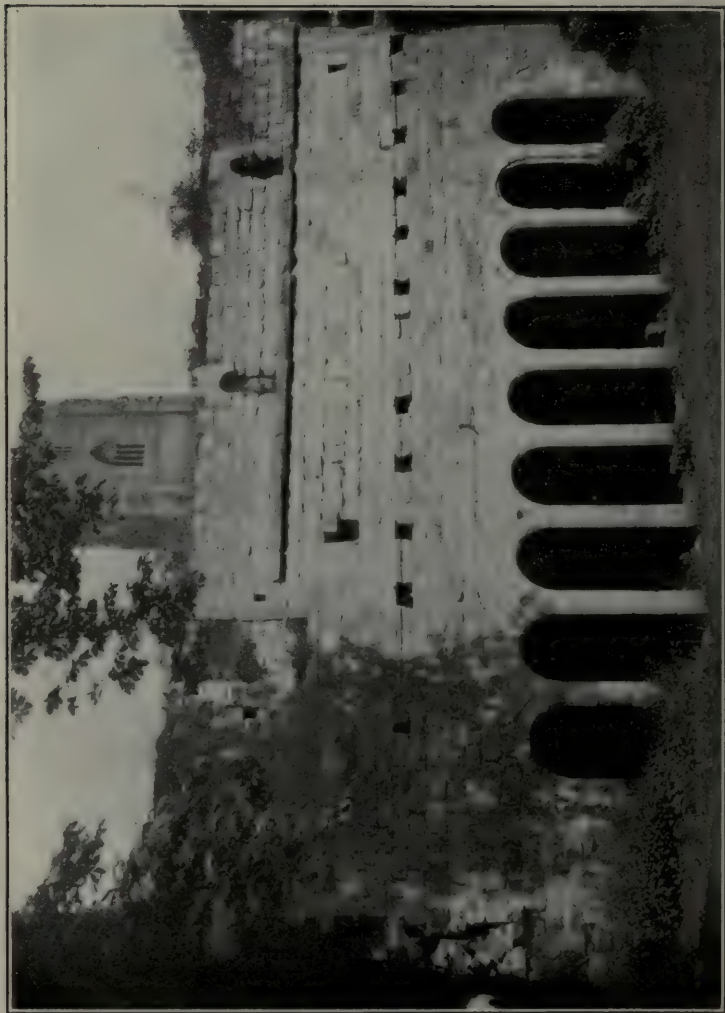


FIG. 81. BASEMENT OF LAY-BROTHERS' RERE-DORTIER.

From the dormitory roof you see that the basement of the building is divided longitudinally by a solid wall which rises to the level of the floor of the first story (Fig. 80). The stream still runs through each division.

The first floor seems to have been divided by a wooden partition which stood on the longitudinal wall, and would have had two rows of gongs back to back. On the north wall were two pairs of windows, and in its east end a doorway¹, which has been reduced to a small square window. In the west wall were three windows, an upper and two lower, but one of them has been converted into a doorway to give access from the upper floor of the infirmary. In the south wall are three windows, the larger one being of a later date. In the east wall was the doorway from the dormitory, and by its side a window or perhaps a second doorway.

You must now descend and cross the stream to examine the basement, which contains in its south wall a range of nine arches (Fig. 81), forming a series of gongs, which were connected later with the lay-brothers' infirmary. Against this wall was a pentice, which was afterwards lowered; it was approached by a doorway in the west end.

The middle buttress in the west wall of the reredorter has been cut off and recesses made in the two arches. Another recess seems to have been made in the west end of the north wall; above it is a massive corbel of four courses (Fig. 82), the use of which is not clear.

¹ This perhaps opened into a temporary structure, which was run up in wood before the southern part of the cellarium was finished. The question is discussed in Hope, p. 117, and in Reeve, pp. 39-41.

D. THE INFIRMARY OF THE LAY-BROTHERS—
Infirmitorium conversorum

The infirmary of the lay-brothers, 91 feet by 60, stood north and south, and lay almost entirely over the river, supported on four tunnels. It was divided by arcades of six bays with slender octagonal pillars into a nave and two aisles. The north end contains the entrance door (Fig. 83). A pentice stood against it, which seems to have been continued to the pentice against the cellarium (p. 108). Above the doorway are three large windows of equal size. The window remaining at the end of the east aisle shows that the aisles had lean-to roofs, the lines of which can be seen in this same aisle both at the north end (Fig. 83) and in the north wall of the rere-dorter (Fig. 82), against which the aisle roof abutted. Above the aisle roofs was a clerestory.

Why the infirmary was built so as not to clear the rere-dorter is not evident. The course of the river may have compelled it, or a wish to have easy access to the latter structure.

There seems to have been an upper floor to the east aisle with a doorway into the upper floor of the rere-dorter.¹

The aisle walls were built, not on the arches of the tunnels, but on a second row of arches, stretching from pier to pier two feet beyond the ends of the tunnel and high above them. According to Mr. Hope this gave a series of recesses in the two

¹ Or there may have been just a landing with a flight of steps up to it, so as to give access to the rere-dorter at night, when the outer doors would be locked. Reeve, p. 47.

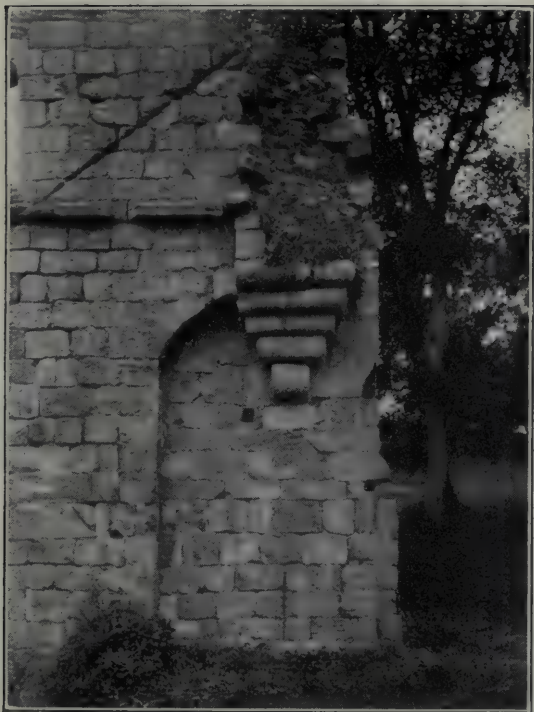


FIG. 82. CORBEL ON NORTH WALL OF LAY-BROTHERS'
RERE-DORTER.

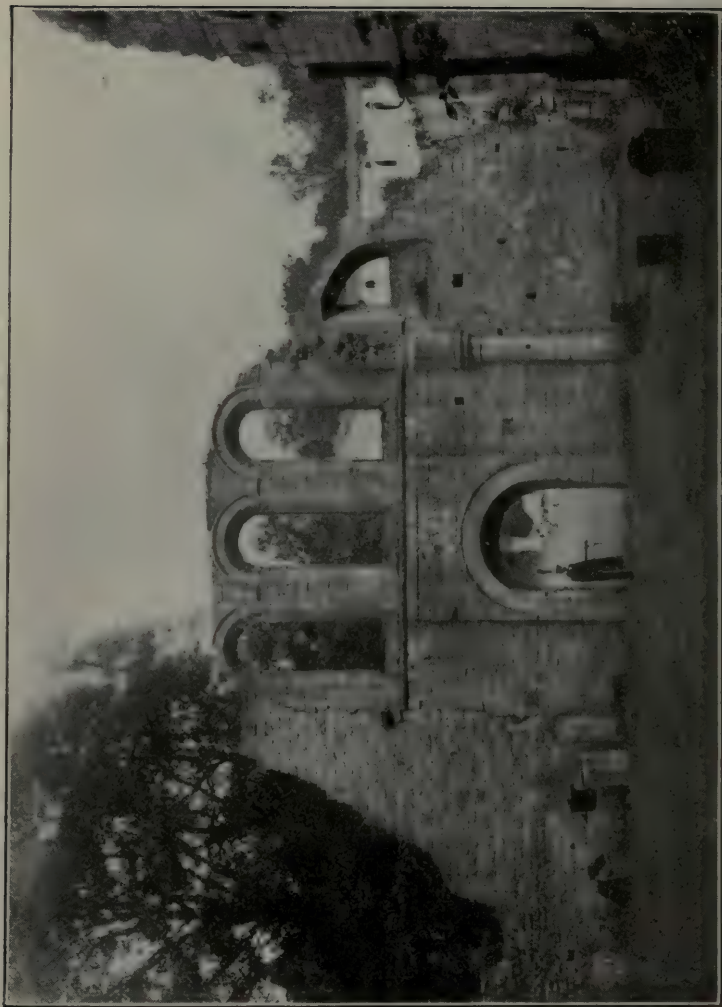


FIG. 83. LAY-BROTHERS' INFIRMARY.

northernmost bays on the east, and in the four northernmost on the west, two in each bay. He implies, from the remains of a window on the west side in the southernmost recess, that there were two windows in each recess, the recesses being about six feet long.¹

In the south end of the west wall you can see part of a wide doorway with three steps down from it leading to a large room, which was, perhaps, the infirmary kitchen.

From the north-west corner of the infirmary there ran a wall to the south-east angle of the building to the east.² It must have been at least twelve feet high, and has an opening to a little twelfth-century foot-bridge of three arches, which runs askew to the stream (Figs. 84 and 85). The parapets of the bridge are not original.

E. THE TUNNELS UNDER THE CELLARIUM AND LAY-BROTHERS' INFIRMARY

The tunnels under the lay-brothers' infirmary and the cellarium are not so elaborately built as those under the monks' infirmary. There is neither plinth nor paving.

(a) INFIRMARY

1. There is no opening in this, the southernmost tunnel.

2. There is a blocked opening, 9 inches square, in the crown of the arch, 21 feet from the east end.

¹ Hope, p. 118; Reeve, p. 47.

² Mr. Reeve suggests that this is part of a wall which ran from the cellarium to the western bridge, and cut off the buildings from the river.

3. Twelve inches from the west end on the south side is a blocked opening which looks as if it had been closed during the erection of the tunnel.

4. Just to the west of this tunnel is the springer of the outermost arch.

(b) CELLARIUM

The four tunnels have semicircular ashlar arches as openings, with segmented rubble arches¹ to accommodate the cellarium floor. The segmented arches vary in height, the southernmost and the second being 4 feet, the third $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the fourth $4\frac{1}{4}$ feet high. In the fourth tunnel, $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the east end and nine inches from the spring on the north side, are remains of a horse-shoe earthenware drain going back $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet.

F. THE GUEST-HOUSES—*Hospitia*

In the old days of the abbey the guest-house was of great importance. The rule of St. Benedict prescribed that all guests who came should be received as Christ Himself—*Omnes supervenientes hospites tanquam Christus suscipiantur* (cap. liii). The arrival at the outer gate was reported to the abbot, who came to meet the guest and then took him into the little chapel for prayer before bringing him through the inner gate into the monastery. As there were two guest-houses here it seems likely that one was for monks and clergy and one for the laity; or one may have been for the poor and the other for the rich as indicated by the account on p. 238.

¹ A segmental arch (*seco*, cut) has a curve which is less than a semicircle.

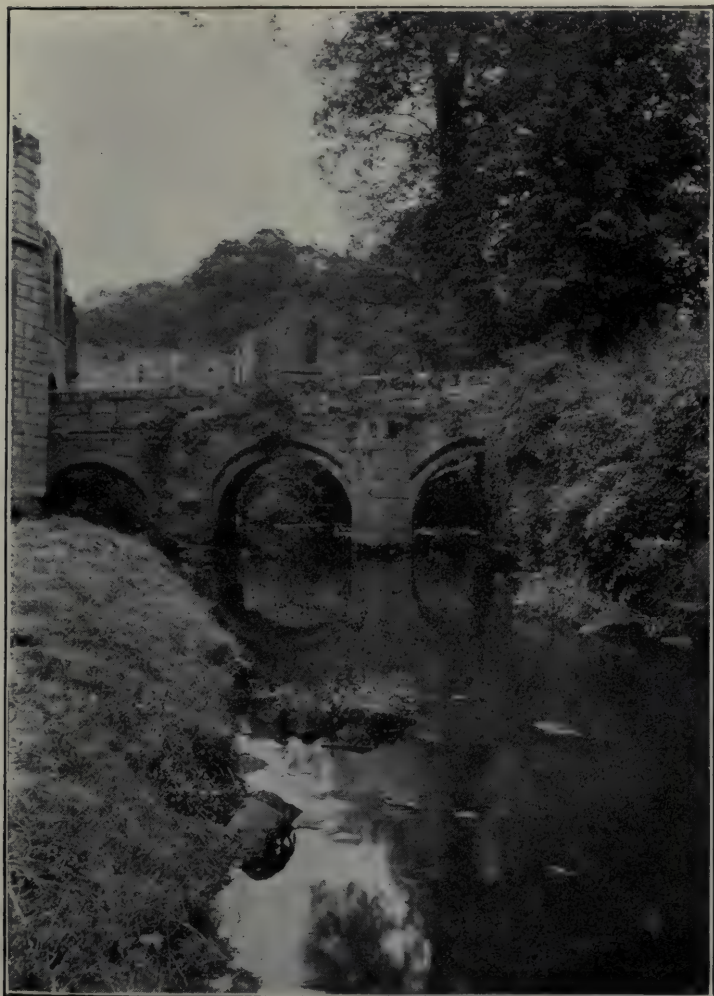


FIG. 84. BRIDGE NEAR LAY-BROTHERS' INFIRMARY.

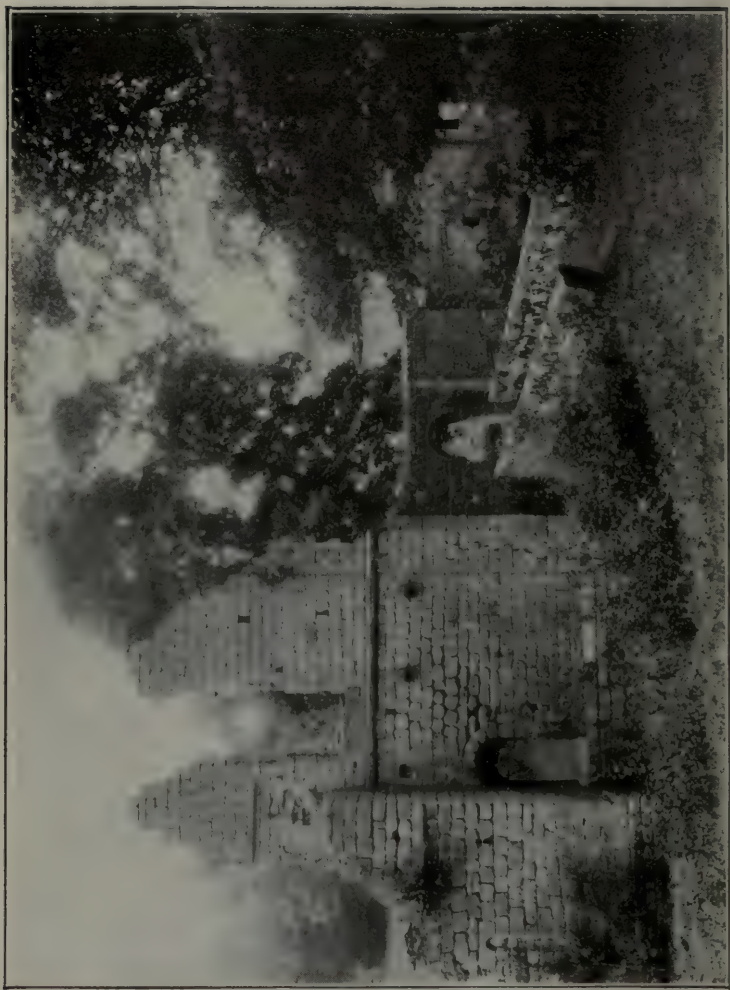


FIG. 85. EASTERN GUEST-HOUSE.

(a) THE EASTERN GUEST-HOUSE

The eastern of the two guest-houses (Figs. 85 and 86) had two floors. The lower room, 73 feet by $23\frac{1}{2}$, was divided into two aisles by an arcade resting on five pillars. The two northernmost, which are still standing, are cylindrical in the centre; the other three, overthrown in modern times,¹ are moulded into clustered columns. The base of the middle one seems to have been prepared for a quatrefoil² shaft; the base of the second from the north is a plain octagon; the bases of the other three are arranged to suit the engaged shafts. Against the walls the vaulting was carried on corbels which are as varied in detail as the columns and their bases.

A cross-wall at the second pillar from the south end divided the room into two unequal parts. On the east side are five windows. On the north side was the door, which at a later time was blocked and converted into a window. The window at its side was altered at the same time. The west wall has no windows, as the external staircase to the upper floor was against it. It has a doorway towards the north, which was probably inserted when the original door was blocked, and two other doorways, both blocked in the fourth and fifth bays; the former opened into the space³ below the stairs, the latter was perhaps once a window.

On the south side is a doorway (Fig. 85), which led to a platform over the stream, covered with

¹ They are shown standing by Cuitt, 1822. He shows also part of the vaulted roof at the north end.

² Four-leaved (*quattuor folia*).

³ There are the remains of two windows to this room.



FIG. 86. EASTERN GUEST-HOUSE.

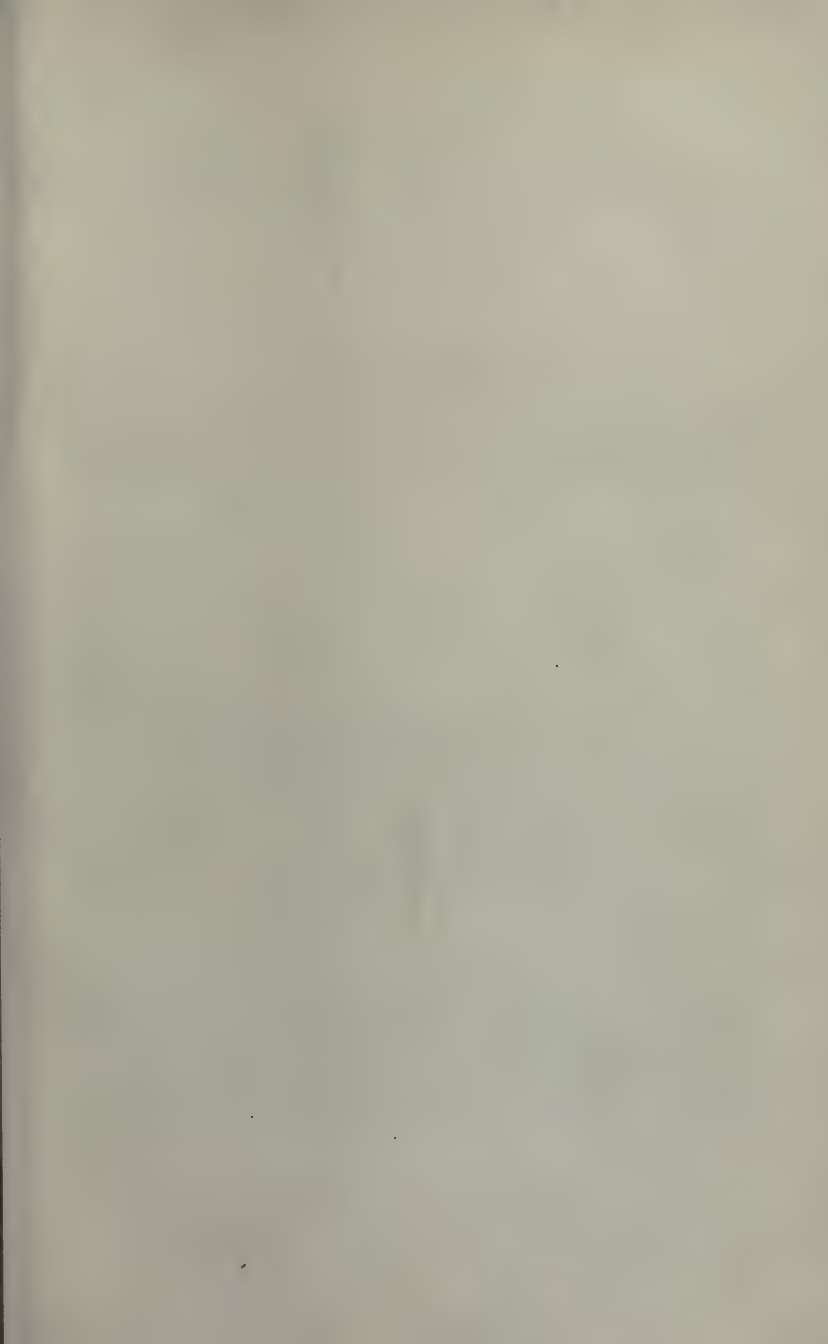




FIG. 87. WESTERN GUEST-HOUSE.

a pentice. This was, perhaps, to enable guests to sit by the stream in the open air. In the south-west corner is a gong divided by a longitudinal wall, so as to serve the upper as well as the lower floor ; it has a loop in the south side.

The north gable of the upper floor contained two two-light windows¹ with a circular window above. Later a fireplace was inserted in the wall, and, the flue being carried in the centre of the gable, the circular window was filled in. In the south gable was a large window. The east wall had probably a fireplace in the centre and windows corresponding to those below. In the west wall was the door.

(b) THE WESTERN GUEST-HOUSE

The western guest-house (Fig. 87) had also two floors. It had an annexe projecting from its northern wall of later date.

The area between the two guest-houses was closed on the south by a wall from the gong in the south-west corner of the eastern house to the south-east corner of the western house² and on the north by a wall from the north-west corner of the former to the north-east corner of the annexe of the latter, the doorway being close to the eastern house.

From the northern wall of the annexe a third wall ran to the stream and enclosed an area to the west

¹ The heads are cut out of one stone. There are no other windows exactly like them in the abbey, but the windows of the first dormitory somewhat resemble them.

² This wall makes a little enclosure, which was covered, and perhaps had a story above it, as there seems the base of a stair against the gong of the eastern guest-house. There was a fire-place to the west, under which the stream flowed in a tunnel.

of the guest-houses. This wall ended in a gong, of which the corbels still remain on the bank.

A short wall ran from the staircase of the eastern house to the north-east corner of the western house, with a doorway near the latter from which a curved passage led to the entrance door of the house.

The lower room, 49 feet by 25, was divided into two aisles by an arcade resting on three pillars. Against the walls the vaulting was carried on corbels. A cross-wall separated the eastern bay from the rest of the room.

In the east side was the entrance door, next to which was a doorway to the court, and beyond this a window. On the south side was a fireplace with two large windows on either side. In the south-west corner was a gong constructed to serve both floors; it still retains its original purpose, although the stream no longer flows under it. A cutwater was subsequently added at the south-west corner to increase the flow of water. The west wall has two windows. There was a pentice against this side of the building with a doorway at its north end. The north wall had two doors, one into the court, the other into the annexe.

The upper story had on the south a fireplace with a window on each side. The west wall had two windows with a circular window above, but the latter was blocked when a fireplace was inserted. There is no indication of what was in the north wall. The east wall had the doorway from an external staircase, the foot of which is at the side of the annexe, though the method of its construction is not clear.

Of the northern annexe hardly anything remains. There was a doorway at the south end of its west

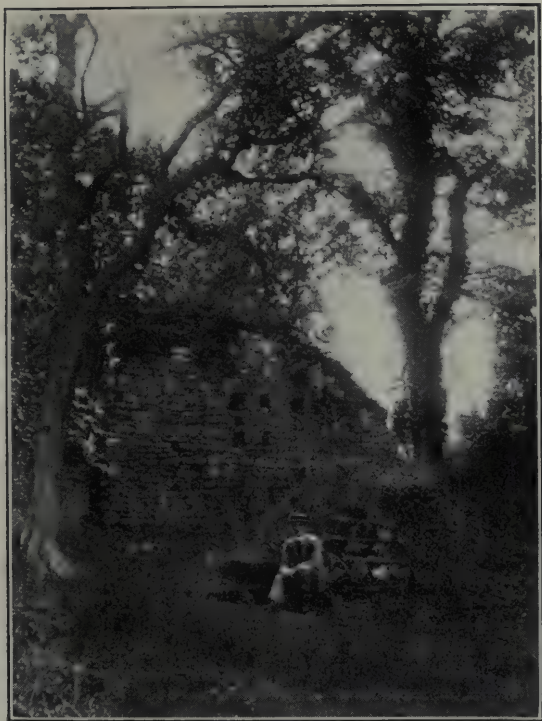


FIG. 89. SOUTH WALL OF BAKEHOUSE.

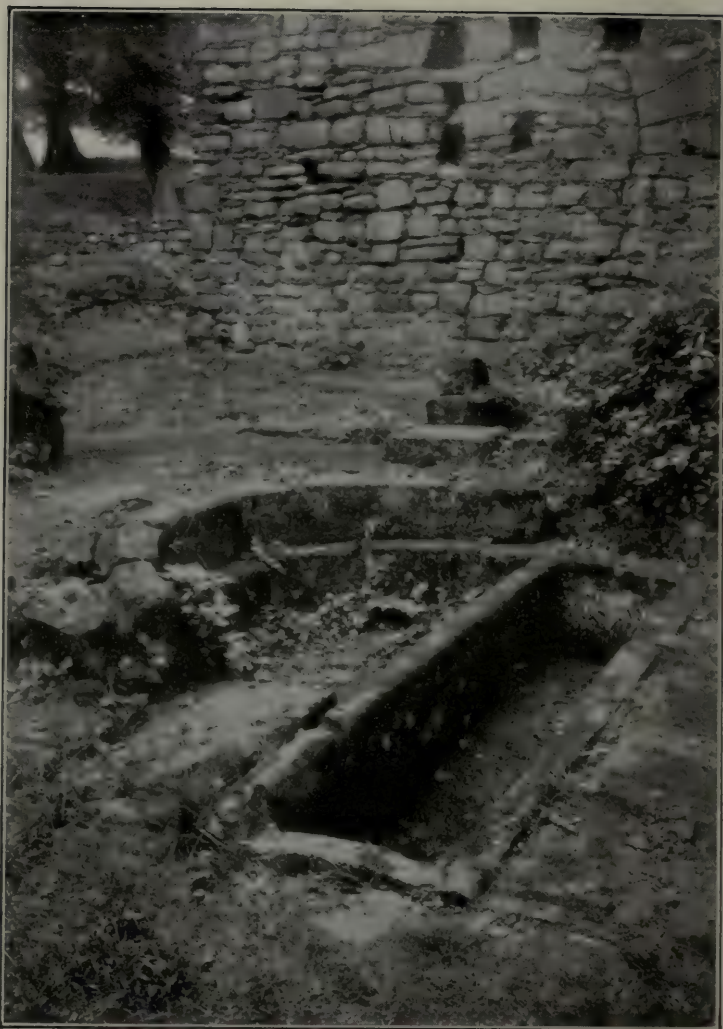


FIG. 90. TROUGH IN BAKEHOUSE.

wall, and another in the east wall at the foot of the outside stair. The building was divided into two aisles by an arcade resting on two pillars, but only the base of a half-octagon pier remains against the south wall. The three buttresses, two on the west and one on the east, are later additions, and were erected to strengthen the side walls unless the vaulting itself was of later date than the building.

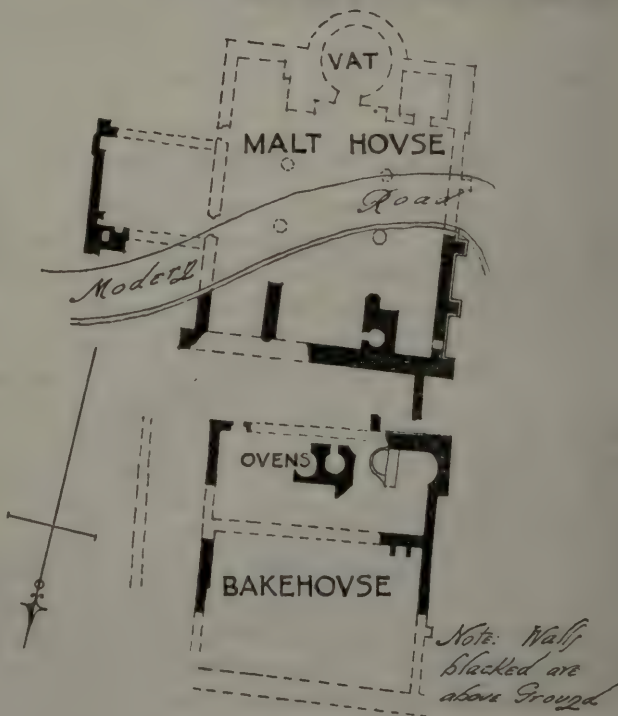
G. THE MALTHOUSE AND THE BAKEHOUSE

From the guest-houses go west along the stream and you come to a little thirteenth-century bridge. After you have crossed it you will see on your right the last remaining of the old yew trees under which the monks are traditionally said to have first settled. A few yards further you come to the remains of the malthouse and bakehouse standing back to back (Fig. 88).

The northern building is the bakehouse. In the party wall you can see the remains of a large arch and a corbel at its side (Fig. 89). In front of the wall is a pavement of large slabs with a narrow door to the west, outside of which there seems to have been a pentice, and with a fireplace to the east. To the south of the pavement are two ovens. West of these is a semicircular stone trough with a groove leading to a long oblong trough (Fig. 90), and west of these again a recess in the wall. To the north-east of the ovens is a flight of steps. To the north of the whole block was a large room.

The southern building, the malthouse, is crossed by a modern wall and path. Across the west wall are three buttresses showing that the building was vaulted. It was divided into three aisles. The north

BAKEHOUSE AND MALTHOUSE



Scale of Feet

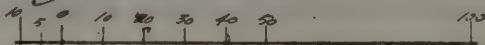


FIG. 88.

wall has in its west aisle a string-course, and in the centre aisle another at a higher level. Between the two is a groove for a pipe from the upper floor. Against the wall is a large circular hearth with a wall running south from it which ends in a half-octagon stone. From this is a narrow wall running farther south. In the north end of the west wall is a small pointed drain, and a shoot above it. Between the central and the eastern aisles is the fragment of a wall with a chamfered plinth on each side. The end of a lead pipe can be seen in the floor just inside its southern end.

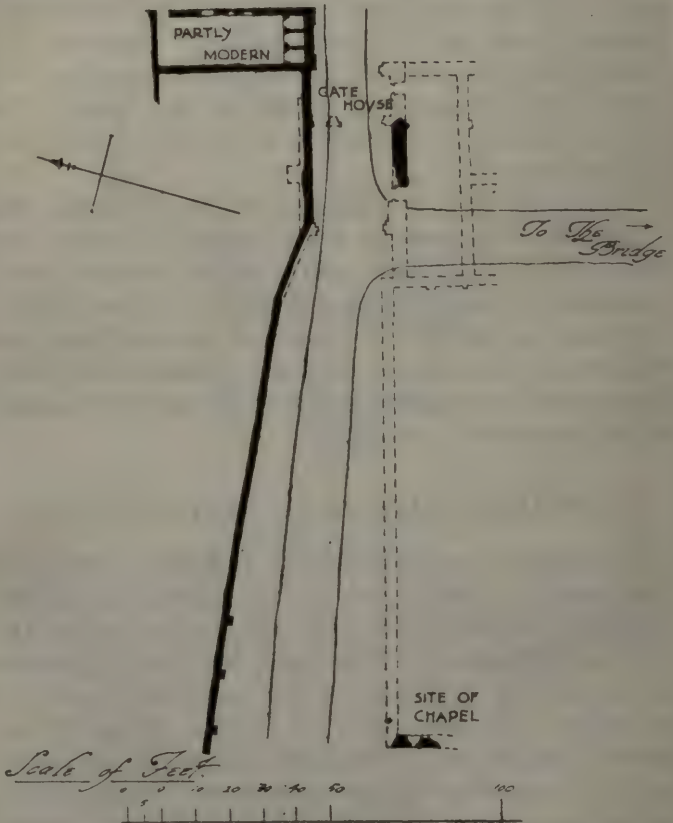
The part of this building which is across the modern wall proved on excavation to have in the centre of its southern end a large circular tank composed of brick and cemented on the inside. Remains of the eastern part of the building can still be seen though the tank has been covered over. It contained a fireplace in the south-east and a gong in the north-east corner.

H. THE INNER GATE-HOUSE, CHAPEL, AND MILL

Recrossing the bridge and following the path you come to the ruins of the inner gate-house (Fig. 91), which date from the beginning of the thirteenth century. The north wall and a portion of the south wall of the entrance-way are still standing. To the south of it was probably the porter's lodge and to the west of this was a passage at right angles to the main entrance leading south to the bakehouse. The whole building was vaulted in stone, and had a second story.

From the gate-house two walls ran to the outer gate-house, of which there is now no trace; it

PLAN OF GATEHOUSE



JRT
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FIG. 91.

was doubtless destroyed when Fountains Hall was built, about 1600. Along the north wall are corbels for a pentice (Fig. 92). The stables perhaps stood there as they did at Clairvaux.¹ The foundations of the south wall remain underground. About 139 feet along it you can see the west wall of a little twelfth-century chapel (Fig. 93), into

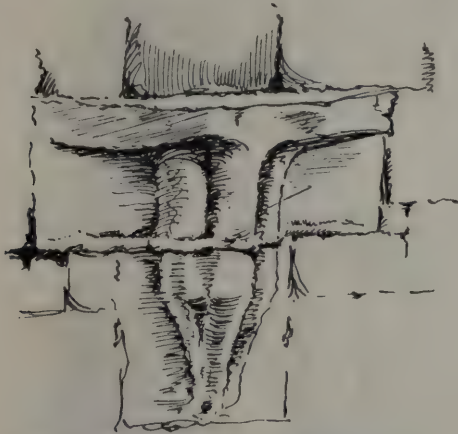


FIG. 92. CORBEL OF GATE-HOUSE.

which, as we noticed on p. 114, the abbot took guests to pray before entering the inner gate.²

Just across the stream is the abbey-mill (Fig. 94), which is still in active work. Part of the north end has been destroyed and replaced by a smaller building, but the main part dates from the thir-

¹ Here, however, they were just within the inner gate.

² At Citeaux and Clairvaux it was on the left-hand side as one entered the monastery. In old plans of these abbeys it is called *capella portae*, the chapel of the gate. At Clairvaux it was within the inner gate, probably because the outer gate was so far from the monastic buildings.

teenth century. On the east side there are fragments of the twelfth century, some being apparently anterior to the fire. There is the half of a twelfth-century window at the north end of the east wall. Of the same date are the two wide doors with segmental heads, the blocked arch through which



FIG. 93. THE GATE CHAPEL.

the water formerly ran from the wheel, the blocked window at its side, and two of the doorways at the south end of the east wall. Part of the south end of the building is also of the twelfth century.

A wall ran round the whole precinct, a large portion of which still remains (Fig. 101). The monks themselves lived and worked entirely within this wall. A large part of it can be seen running to the south up the road beyond Fountains Hall.

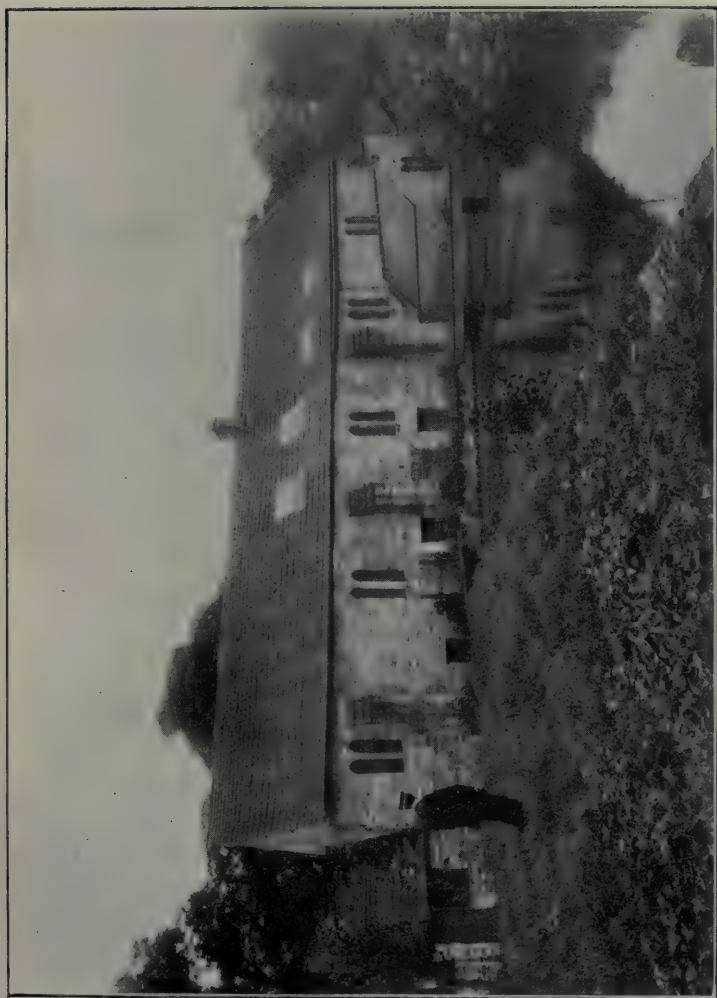


FIG. 94. THE MILL.



FIG. 97 (1). ARCH BELOW SOUTH SIDE OF TOWER.



FIG. 97 (2). TOWER FROM NORTH-WEST.

APPENDIX I

THE STORY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE MONASTERY OF FOUNTAINS IN THE COUNTY OF YORK

(The original can be found in Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum* and in *Memorials of the Abbey of St. Mary of Fountains*, collected and edited by John Richard Walbran, F.S.A. The latter work is vol. xlii of the publications of the Surtees Society.)

Preface

To the reverend father and master, John¹ abbot of Fountains, I, brother Hugo, monk of Kirkstall, send greetings both for this life and the life to come.

It has pleased your excellency, venerable father, that I should briefly show in a chronicle by whose influence and in what manner our holy mother, the church of Fountains, over which by God's grace you now preside, was first founded, and in what way that vine, blessed of God, grew in a place of horror and vast solitude, and spread herself abroad, stretching out her branches even unto the sea, and her shoots to the outer nations.² Moreover,

¹ This seems to have been John of York, abbot from 1203 to 1211.

² Lisa, in Norway, was a daughter monastery of Fountains.

for the strengthening of the evidence you did advise that I should ask Serlo our elder for his mind upon these matters, since he commands more credence with regard to doubtful points, having been himself present at some of the events, and having frequently heard the true story in order from his predecessors. I called on the old man to ask about such matters as were in doubt, entreating him not to put forward what was not well investigated, not to touch on the unknown, to be silent on obscure points, and only lay before me such events as he had either seen himself or had received on good authority from his predecessors.

Then the old man said in his serious way, ' This is the sixty-ninth year since the time of my conversion, and I was then, as I remember, near about the beginning of my thirtieth year, when I first betook myself to Fountains to join the holy brotherhood. I cannot be ignorant of what happened there at that time. I myself was present at the secession of the monks from the monastery of York ; from my boyhood I knew by face and name those who seceded ; I was born in their part of the country ; I was brought up among them ; to several of them I was related according to the flesh. And although I am, as you see, stricken in years, I am very grateful to my old age because my memory remains unimpaired, and holds right fast the things which were committed to it in early years. Therefore concerning the origin of the monastery of Fountains I will set forth, as you bid, all that I have seen with my own eyes or have heard from my predecessors on undoubted authority.'

I have written, therefore, in order what I heard

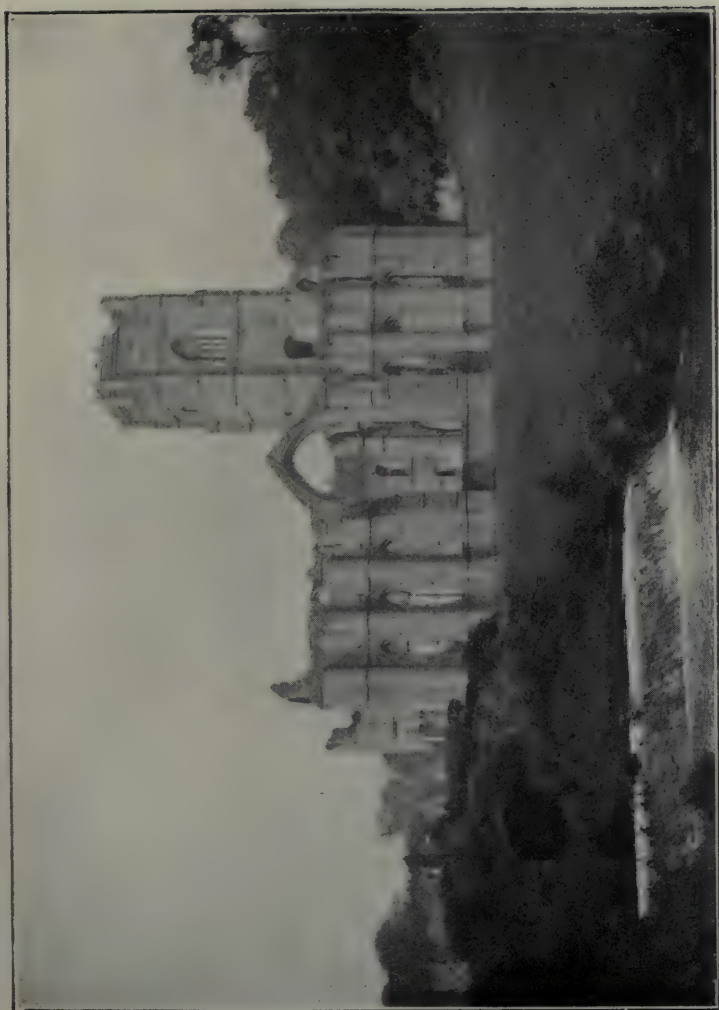


FIG. 100. THE ABBEY FROM THE EAST.

from the old man, undertaking a task beyond my powers, but giving all care that the bare events should be treasured up until some day a man shall appear who with more graceful pen shall be equal to the dignity of the subject. I gave all attention the while the old man began his story.

How the early fathers seceded from the Monastery of York.

When the illustrious King Henry, son of King William, surnamed the Bastard, ruled in England, the country was at peace before his face. Everywhere churches were raised, monasteries were built; war being lulled to sleep, holy religion on all sides was spread abroad. At that same time there flourished the blessed Bernard of happy memory, Abbot of Clairvaux, a grand man, a zealous worker for God, conspicuous for piety, distinguished in teaching, famous for his miracles. His chief care was the worship of God, the salvation of souls, the increase of his people, to give glory to God from his lips, to glory in God's name. He was the father of many monks, had built monasteries not a few, and with soldiers sent forth on his campaign had occupied the neighbouring country, winning famous victories from the ancient foe, seizing spoil and giving it back to his King. This man, by divine inspiration, had sent from his noble vine of Clairvaux a promising off-shoot, namely, a body of monks, to England, seeking fruit in that nation as in all other places of the earth. There is still in existence the letter which he wrote on their behalf to the king, declaring that spoil belonging to his Lord was held in the country and that he

had sent vigorous men who would seek it, recover it, and take it back. He urged the king to help his messengers, and in this matter not to fail from his oath. Even so it was done. They were received with honour by the king and country, and laid new foundations in the province of York by building the abbey which is called Rievaulx. This was the first offshoot of the Cistercian order in the territory of York. But those who had been sent were holy and religious men, glorying in poverty, and keeping peace with all men save with their own bodies and the ancient foe. For they bore the stamp of the discipline of their Clairvaux, whence they had come, and were redolent in their deeds of piety of the fragrance of their mother.

A report spread abroad that there had come from a far country men of extraordinary holiness and perfect piety, who spoke on earth with the tongues of angels and by their virtues were worthy of the name of monk. A desire to imitate them moved many who joined themselves to those 'whose hearts God had touched',¹ and in a short time became a great people.

The Monastery of York

Now there were at that time in the convent of York, which is called the monastery of St. Mary, religious men walking in the ways of their fathers, and going on their way without complaint in those institutions which they had received from their predecessors. They lived in accordance with the manner and custom of the traditions handed down to them, with all sincerity under the Rule and

¹ 1 Sam. x. 26.

their abbot, yet falling far short of the demand of the Rule, of the vow of their profession, of the perfection of the Cistercian discipline. Some of these men, hearing of the purity of our order, were moved by a certain pious desire to follow it, for their consciences accused them that they had not fulfilled their profession, and they measured by the success of others their own failure. Suddenly they began to be weary of their former lukewarmness, to blush at their imperfection, to condemn their luxuries, to loathe their accustomed fare.

They were ashamed to have stopped short of perfection, to have settled in the borders of Moab, and to have received an inheritance beyond Jordan.¹ They were weary of the tumult of the age, of the clamour of the state. With all eagerness they longed for the desert, for manual labour, for the pots of the prophets.² There arose a mighty conspiracy of the spirit against the flesh. It was their pleasure to clad themselves in sack-cloth and hair-shirts, to correct by a severer judgement the indulgences of a too lax mode of life. First and foremost of these were Richard the sacristan, Ranulph, Gamel, Gregory, Hamo, Thomas, and Walter. These are the men whom God chose for Himself to be a seed by whose labour and exhortation others are brought into the way and drawn to assent. They conceived in the fear of God and brought forth the spirit of counsel as the event proved. They entered into a bond and made firm their purpose. As yet the agreement was concealed from the prior, for they feared that he might oppose them and frustrate their undertaking. But the

¹ Joshua xiii. 32.

² 2 Kings iv. 38.

fear was groundless. For he himself, by the like prevention of grace, was turned to a like disposition, was burning with the same desire, was in travail with the same spirit which they themselves had conceived. He was ashamed that he had received the name of monk in vain, the habit without the work, the seal without its meaning, and that while professing perfection he had till then made few efforts to attain it. What was the sequel? He heard their vows, gave his consent, and with thanks to God joined himself to their company, and gladly became one of them. He was a religious and God-fearing man, wise in worldly matters, a friend of those in power, for the reverence due to his piety made him beloved and honoured by all; he was also an intimate acquaintance of the bishop who then ruled the province of York. His name was Richard. They met now more freely, talked more boldly, and by mutual persuasion drew others to their company. They were now thirteen in number, men 'of one heart and of one soul'.¹ All desired the holy simplicity of the Cistercian order, to be grafted into the fatness of that olive tree,² to experience the advantages of poverty, to join in the holy road. They discussed the question of secession, and how it should be done, not fearing poverty, nor the severity of the winter; thinking only how, without disturbing the peace of the brethren, and without scandal, their object might be effected. But this was difficult. For now their agreement had become public, and a rumour spread among the brethren that the prior and his associates were moved by a spirit of levity, were teaching secession from

¹ Acts iv. 32.

² Rom. xi. 17.

their own people, and were setting about new and unlawful plans which would lead to contempt of their order, the disgrace of their house, the confusion and scandal of the whole convent. Men accused them of changeableness, blamed their indiscretion, set forth the heinousness of their sin, and, as almost all cried out against them, a great tumult arose in the house. It seemed wrong to leave certainty for uncertainty, wealth for poverty, to have no regard for the peace of the brethren, for the scandal to the weak, for the profession once made there. It was a dangerous thing to despise the laws of the fathers, to change their counsels, to destroy the fraternal unity which was so sweet. The matter was laid before the abbot who then presided, a man of great age and disabled by years; his name was Geoffrey. He was astounded at the novelty of the project, and thought it terrible that in his old age there should happen such unwelcome events as the disgrace of his house, the desertion of his order, the ruin of his sons. He warned them to give up their plans, to change their projects, for which there was no justification, to remember the profession they had once made, that they were not their own masters and had no right to break the oath which they had so solemnly taken. He threatened them with the discipline of the order and severe penalties, and pointed out that as the issue was uncertain they were plainly at fault in making the beginning. He urged them in every way to change their plan, to revoke their decision, to subdue the temper which they were just beginning to show. But their intention was not contrary to the Lord's will, and so their purpose remained unshaken, their resolve

immovable, and the more the abbot tried to dissuade them, the more did the fire burn, fed with the fuel of fervour and faith.

How Archbishop Thurstan helped them

There presided over the church of York at that time archbishop Thurstan of pious memory, a man of great deeds and a lover of the whole monastic life. Seizing his opportunity, Prior Richard approached him, laid before him the holy project, asked his advice, and reverently implored his aid. He made known to him the opposition of the brethren, the refusal of the abbot, the discipline of the order. He made known to him the weight of their profession, the slackness of their life, the pricking of their conscience, their desire for improvement which could not be fulfilled unless the authority of the bishop intervened. The holy bishop observed that this was the work of God and not of man, and rejoicing in their holy desire, gave his consent and promised his help. They settled therefore on a day, which they announced to the abbot, when the archbishop of York, according to custom, should go to the said monastery for the visitation of the brethren. The abbot of the house viewed this notice with suspicion, fearing lest the archbishop should favour the other side, and assume some new privilege to the prejudice of the house. He therefore sent messengers to the monasteries throughout England, and called together learned men, and there collected no small multitude of monks to meet the archbishop. He did all this that, leaning on their aid, he might resist the bishop and curb the insolence of the brethren.

When the day came the holy bishop appeared in a spirit of gentleness and peace, having in his train, as was fitting, grave persons and prudent clerics, canons, and others who were monks. The abbot met him at the door of the chapter-house, and, surrounded by a great crowd of monks, refused admission, and declared that it was not lawful for him to visit them with so great a retinue or for a secular to be present at the secret meetings of the chapter. Let him dismiss the crowd and enter, if he wished, alone, so that the discipline of the order might not be disturbed by the insolence of clerics. The bishop was not willing that his followers should be removed, and said that he could not fittingly sit alone in so large a meeting without advisers, especially as they themselves had admitted many monks from distant places. Then the monks and the clergy broke out into tumult, and a violent quarrel took place in the cloister, one side pushing back, the other side trying to get in. On this the holy bishop commanded silence, and said, 'You withdraw from us to-day the obedience which you owe. Well, we withdraw that which by God's grace you hold from us; we interdict this monastery and, by the authority we possess, suspend the monks who remain in it from the sacraments.' Having said this, he retired and entered the church with his retinue, and there followed him that holy band, separated from the others even as the fat from the lean.

Those who went out with him were thirteen in number. They took with them nothing of the goods of the monastery save the one habit. They were, Richard the prior of the monastery, Richard the sacristan, Ranulph, Thomas, Gamel, Hamo,

Robert of Subella, Geoffrey, Walter, also Gregory, Ralph, and Alexander. A certain monk of Whitby, named Robert, a holy God-fearing man, joined himself to them. He was afterwards abbot and founder of Newminster, of which in its place much more must be said. These were the holy men whom the Lord chose for Himself to be a seed, the founder of our family, the plant by which He should Himself be glorified. Having departed from a rich house, from a wealth of worldly possessions, it seemed to them that now for the first time they had renounced the world, since they carried with them nothing of its goods. But the Lord provided for them. The venerable bishop, dealing with them in right episcopal fashion, received them into his house, and made provision for them, as was fitting, in all things which appertained to the comfort of their bodies.

The year of the secession of the monks from York.

Now the year of their secession from the monastery of York was the one thousand one hundred and thirty-second from the incarnation of our Lord, on the sixth of October. The abbot, meanwhile, on his side was not slack in action, but sent messengers to the king and set forth his case—the presumption of the bishop, the apostacy of the monks, the destruction of the order, the confusion of holy religion. Surely, he said, it was absurd for a monk to transgress the form of his profession, to change the laws of his predecessors, to declare a law to himself, to cross the bounds which his fathers had fixed from the beginning. He wrote also in hatred of the new enterprise to bishops, abbots, monks,

and to the monasteries in the neighbourhood, declaring that through this event a common injury had been inflicted on the entire monastic life. The venerable archbishop heard of this, and, wishing to anticipate the malice of the other side, wrote to William, archbishop of Canterbury and papal legate, carefully setting forth the cause and manner of the secession. This letter still exists, and we have decided that it shall be inserted in this narrative to strengthen the evidence of its truth.

Here beginneth the letter concerning the secession of the monks from the monastery of St. Mary of York.

To the most reverend and, in Christian love, the most serene Lord William,¹ by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury and papal legate, Thurstan, by the same grace archbishop of York, sends prayer that he may go forward in Christ and never fail.

It is the highest honour of an ecclesiastical dignitary, to communicate his counsel in times of difficulty to his sons and the chief men of the churches. We have therefore resolved to lay before you an unusual event which lately happened among us at York, O venerable lord and excellent father. It is surely very well known with what excellence and reputation of virtue the famous monastery of St. Mary of York has become distinguished in the ears of many. For in

¹ William Corbeil, archbishop from 1122 to 1138. Thurstan had been disputing his claim to authority over the northern province for some years.

a few years it has both greatly increased in possessions and has laudably increased in the number and piety of its brethren. But since there is no doubt that when wealth comes virtue fails and rarely stands firm, some of the brothers of this monastery about half a year ago moved, if I mistake not, by the inspiration of God, began to be greatly troubled concerning the condition and manner of their daily life. For meditating deeply upon what in the beginning of their conversion they had professed before God and his saints concerning their faithfulness of purpose, the conversion of their habits, their obedience to the rule of St. Benedict, their conscience pricked them and they began, as they own, to labour under much anguish. Assuredly they almost feared they would be lost, if on so great a vow there followed so contemptible a performance. For with regard to the fulfilment of their monastic vows, the tenor of the Divine authority was not hid from them. The spirit of God saith by the psalmist, 'Vow and pay.'¹ And again, 'Pay thy vows unto the most high.'² And again, 'I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered.'³ Whence also Solomon in Ecclesiastes⁴ saith, 'Pay that which thou hast vowed.' And the Truth in the gospel saith,⁵ 'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.' Who would not be terrified by such vehement warnings from God save the man who has never been fed and nourished by the sweetness of truth? The more so because nowhere in the scriptures is there a

¹ Ps. lxxvi. 11.² Ps. l. 14.³ Ps. lxxvi. 13, 14.⁴ v. 4.⁵ Luke ix. 62.

passage opposed to this, or which strives to contradict it. Wherefore assuredly the brothers of York, of whom we speak, were moved, as we said, by an unmeasurable horror, because they seemed in no way at all or hardly at all to be fulfilling the vow of their profession, and feared lest they should run, or had already run in vain,¹ if fitting vengeance were to fall upon men who were guilty of so great disobedience to their vow. For they thought it foolish, mad indeed, to bear the rule of the blessed Benedict, if it led, not to the attainment of spiritual life, but to the sentence of death. They profess by the vow they once took and by their daily duty to observe the rule of the blessed father Benedict, but following the regulations of others they seem to observe the holy rule just as they like, rather than in real sincerity. Moreover, the rule preaches voluntary poverty, contempt of the world, the deepest humility, nay, the perfection of all the holy gospel, and in the ears of those who neglect these things it is not a voice of help but of condemnation.

Moved by these considerations, the aforesaid brethren resolved to make known to their prior, who was named Richard, the painful disturbance of their minds. They explained to him their fear of doing wrong, and begged his support in their attempt to keep more clearly their vow. They adjured him by the spirit of God and the name of Christ not to let any consideration of gain or loss make him afraid of helping them. The novelty of the proposal greatly frightened him, but although he had the reputation among the monks of enjoying the greatest prosperity, as soon as he heard the

¹ Phil. ii. 16.

rumour of a better life, he weighed and found wanting the precarious chances of unstable fortune. In a little while, as it happened, he took counsel with the truth within him, then and there judged between the one count and the other, and gave his decision. He promised not only to help them, but to share himself in their vow. What then? Not long after their number grew to thirteen, all of whom made it their aim to strive for the correction of their manner of life according to the rule of the blessed Benedict, nay, rather according to the truth of the Gospel. Therefore on the vigil of the apostles Peter and Paul,¹ our dear brother, Prior Richard, on whom depended nearly all the management of the monastery, took with him his sub-prior Gervase, a man noted among the rest for piety, and tried to explain in a friendly manner to the abbot the question which was being discussed. The abbot, a man undoubtedly honest and good, as far as his sense and intelligence went, but somewhat simple and uneducated, was terrified at the marvel of the new idea. He declared that he could not alter in his monastery those ancient rites and established customs which the great majority of monks in almost the whole world maintained.

‘But,’ said the prior, a truly learned man, ‘it is nothing crude or new, father, which we are trying to introduce, but it is our duty to adopt the ancient rule of our blessed father Benedict, nay, rather the most ancient gospel of Christ, which transcends all rules, and to observe it by God’s grace with all our strength. We say nothing against any of the other monks, we cast no slur

¹ June 28, 1132

on the methods of men whose smallest and simplest virtue we are not able with our whole strength to attain. We know that everywhere men serve one God, fight for one King, and that in market and cloister the grace of God is equally strong. Job stood forth mightier on his dunghill than Adam in Paradise. Moreover, we do not doubt that very excellent men have lived under the institutions from which we shrink, and we admire more heartily their life and character because under alien institutions they were able to keep their profession and their rule,—nay more, to speak truly, redeem it by their great virtues. But surely it is one thing for some man by a miracle of grace to mean well and do well among others less earnest, and another thing for the great multitude of the churches to live rightly according to the true standard of divine authority. In the rule of our father Benedict we were taught the truth of the whole gospel, wherein, as the blessed Benedict says himself, there is founded the school of our Lord's service, in which there is nothing taught which is harsh or burdensome, for the yoke of our Lord is easy and his burden light. Moreover, the blessed Pope Gregory describes this rule in a homily as full of light, so that we can interpret nothing in it otherwise than according to the explanation given there with concise simplicity, for all its words are spirit and life. And again the same learned man calls its prudence most remarkable, because it is so conspicuous for its sober moderation, that under it are strong men who are eager and weak men who turn not away. For its author, a man full of the spirit of all justice, and richly versed in spiritual philosophy, planned his rule with so much prudence

that he took from the monks the feeling of tedium, and provided medicine for their bodies. For since he knew and preached that sloth is the enemy of the soul, he fixed certain times for reading and earnest prayer, and certain times also for useful labour; so that, on the one hand, he might give healthy exercise to the soul, and on the other to the body, and might remove the feeling of monotony from both. On the one side he would solace with holy meditation the hungry soul, on the other he would restore the sluggard body with pious labour, lest it should grow wanton. But what shall I say about his system of diet? If any one shall carefully consider what regularity he maintains in the daily fare, he would think that this doctor of the spirit has secured health not only for souls but also for bodies. Indeed, it was an established opinion among the ancient spiritual fathers that nothing conduced so much to a permanent condition of spiritual welfare as moderation and regularity in the use of food. For moderation and regularity in necessary meals seem to modify the irregular and baneful impulses of concupiscence. Moreover, every one knows that physicians very decidedly uphold the theory that there is no better way of avoiding unhealthy conditions than for every man to aim at a moderate and regular frugality in his diet. In short, all the regulations of the blessed Benedict were designed by the Holy Spirit, so that nothing more useful, nothing more holy, nothing more successful could be imagined. For the rule of the blessed Benedict set forth the whole Gospel, not in an allegorical interpretation, but by simple practice and the visible illustration of its workings. So that it may truly

be admitted that this rule alone dares without any hesitation to declare, "He ordained in me charity."

'But now, my father,' said the prior, 'look on the other side and let us see how insupportable is the task of trying to live sinless under the regulations we observe here. For except on a few days we daily hold frequent consultations as if for the good of the order. Woe to us! For our rule, in accordance with which we made our profession, so strongly forbids conversation, that only a rare permission to talk is granted to perfect disciples even when the talk is for edification; nor may any one speak, except in reply to an authorized question or for some legitimate need. But we, sad to say, stand gaping at our daily consultations, to hear or tell the gossip of the day; or, what is worse, we whisper scandal and vicious stories. There will be an inquiry at the end into vain, idle, and dirty talk. The gospel allows that for every idle word we shall give account in the day of judgement.¹ By Christ, I say, where is that which our superiors command us after chapter when the parliament² is dissolved, "Speak ye of good." Surely a good command is in a wretched state when it issues in unbridled license and is turned to evil and to the grave peril of souls. Woe is me! What are we to say when, from morn to evening, not only in the general consultation, but also in the parlour,³

¹ Matt. xii. 36.

² The parliament was the daily consultation between the abbot and the officials concerning the business of the monastery. It was held after the meeting in chapter. The present use of the word has come from this original meaning.

³ See p. 76.

in the chambers,¹ in the various work-rooms, even in the public streets, in groups of two, three, or more, we dare to occupy our time with idle and vain chatter? Nay, I shall call that monastery happy which is occupied only with trifles and not with vicious and scurrilous conversation. Now these evil results prove from what a beginning they come. For when strife, dissension, and abuse arise among the brethren, and altercations and murmurings against those in authority, it is clear from what kind of a root such evil sprang. How then can we be so mad as to call ourselves monks of the blessed Benedict, who forbids with many threats all those things which we in our great presumption are not afraid to do. For these are his own words—“Scandal, and idle talk and jokes we ban everywhere and absolutely; we will not permit a disciple to open his mouth to say such things.” And elsewhere he says, “At all times monks ought to aim at silence, but especially in the night hours.”² How diligently this decree is observed, every one knows who has had an opportunity of seeing our habits. For while some of us go into the church after collation,³ others wander away for trifling and useless chatter, as if the malice of the day were not sufficient unless that of the night were also added. And why recall our extravagance in diet? For many dishes are added over and above what was ordered by the blessed Benedict, giving the wicked impression that the rule is best observed where the greatest superfluity can be enjoyed.

¹ Probably rooms set apart for necessary speaking, as the parlours were, but the reredorter may be meant.

² Rule of St. Benedict, chap. vi and xlii.

³ See p. 4.

Why should I speak of our exquisite delicacies, our variously flavoured sauces, our many dainties? Assuredly new stimulation is applied to the full and over-gorged belly, so that, while there is hardly a scrap of room left in it, the voluptuous desire of eating still grows. And though the burdened lungs belch forth intolerable stinks, a new variety of food removes satiety. The same is true of the agreeable and splendid variety of drinks, of the elaborate delicacy of raiment. These were not the sentiments or the teachings of our blessed Benedict, according to whose rule we make our profession. For the rule looks at warmth, not colour in dress; it seeks not savour in the articles of food, but satisfies necessity with a frugal diet. For no other reason was the rich man in the gospel condemned than because he wore costly raiment and fared sumptuously every day,¹ and because he employed profitable things unprofitably, and wearied himself with superfluity, whereas he might with them have supplied the wants of many of the poor. But if there be any failure in observing the established rule, how wretched shall the transgressor be when he shall stand in their assembly. Assuredly, if I mistake not, he falls among those of whom the Psalmist saith, "Verily they shall be dispersed to their eating, and if they are not satisfied they will murmur."² Now let us gather together these ill-natured frivolities, this vain and harmful gossip, these luxurious feastings, these frequent and splendid potations, the other countless superfluities, and I think we shall make a foul and noisome heap. If I mistake not, chastity is with difficulty

¹ Luke xvi. 19.

² The reference is apparently to Pss. lxxviii and cvi.

preserved in such surroundings. Torches and watchmen scarce suffice to drive hence our sins since these pay no heed to people in high position, and those whose number makes them formidable. How in the meantime our souls prosper, God knows, and we have learned from experience. For, since as a result of idleness and guzzling, the mind becomes torpid with sloth, and the body weak with reckless living, it has come about that in our monastery there are more slothful brothers than zealous, more sick than well. What then remains, except that as a result of slothful superstition a monk becomes cantankerous, querulous, malevolent, and, unless he is quickly removed, as it were, to a bright health-giving air, ruin and heavy disgrace threaten him and afterwards his superiors. Whether all wish it or not, he becomes for the most part a steward of farms, and, while he pretends to seek salvation, ends in being a laughing-stock because of his vices. And not undeservedly. For when with rash presumption a monk, in opposition to the due observance of his rule, seeks the things he ought not, then by the just judgement of God he often slips into actions which ill befit him. Whoever will read the rule of the blessed Benedict will find that monks who are to be sent on a journey for the advantage or needs of the monastery are to return quickly,¹ and are not to be found standing about in the villages, lingering like Sarabites.² Indeed, the blessed Benedict does not acknowledge monks as his unless they live in monasteries under

¹ *Rule of St. Benedict*, chap. lxvii. The Cistercian rule (lxxxviii) was much stricter.

² A class of wandering monks whom St. Benedict censures in the first chapter of his rule.

a rule and an abbot. There is no time to say how often, as a result of the desire and care for temporal possessions, charity has been weakened. But do not be led away, my father, by the thought of the liberty of an abbey, as if it could excuse a monk or an abbot from the obedience which is commanded by the rule. We ought in all things to obey the commands of an abbot, yet you know what is laid down in the rule. It says to the abbot, "Let him do everything in observance of the rule."¹ And again, "In all things let him keep the rule in view."² Also generally, "Let all follow the rule in all things as their guide."³ Moreover, if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.⁴ And as for the objection raised by some people, that it *is* possible for monks in their cloister under such institutions to observe the rule in holy contemplation and much affliction of the flesh, I reply that this example does not deal with the difficulty but explains it by another difficulty. Indeed, under these institutions a man can no more fulfil the rule of the blessed Benedict than "the camel can go through the eye of a needle."⁵ Even with great virtues he can only, if I mistake not, compound with it, not fulfil it. Let a man say if he dare—I for one dare not say it—that any one can innocently fail to do what he knows to be right and escape the guilt of dishonour by any other means than by doing the right he knows. To this, as we said before, the divine authority is witness, and absolutely no authority speaks on the other side. Moreover, if any man tries to lead

¹ *Rule*, chap. iii.

² *Rule*, chap. xlv.

³ *Rule*, chap. iii.

⁴ *Matt.* xv. 14.

⁵ *Matt.* xix. 24.

a holy life under such institutions—and such a man would indeed be a *rara avis*—he is worthy of all praise for accomplishing it by a miracle of grace in spite of the force of circumstance. But men should not be compelled to remain and strive with circumstance if the grace of God has *not* given them strength to lead a good life amid licentious surroundings, for God is a very present help in trial and trouble.¹ And just as all must seek the opportunity of holiness, so all must carefully avoid the contest with dangerous surroundings which is beyond their strength. Surely, even though David by a miracle of strength was able amid his army and the strife of crowds to say, “I would wander far off and remain in the wilderness,”² that contest is not to be attempted by weak men who, even when they are removed from human companionship, can hardly escape the stain of guilt or crime. Again, though it has been possible for some, as it is written in the annals of the brothel, to preserve the purity of harlots, this task is not to be undertaken by weak men who even in the solitary darkness of the prison-house can scarcely avoid the familiar sin. If there are any, therefore, to whom it has been granted by a miracle to lead a good life under pernicious institutions, let them give thanks to God. As for those with whom it is otherwise, let them not aspire to it, but listen to what is said to them by the prophet, “Depart ye, depart ye, touch no unclean thing.”³ For “he that touches pitch shall be defiled thereby.”⁴ Further, if it please you, venerable father, let us turn to the truth, the perfection, and peace

¹ Ps. xlvi. 1.

² Ps. lv. 7.

³ Isa. lii. 11.

⁴ Eccles. xiii. 1.

of the Gospel, and let us see how in our habits and actions the teaching of Christ appears not at all or hardly at all. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."¹ It is well enough known how in the discourse that followed He distinguished between the righteousness of the Pharisees and the righteousness of Christians. But let us be silent about the righteousness of the Pharisees and concern ourselves with what is necessarily sufficient for us. He rebuked the passion of anger thus: "Whosoever shall smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also; if any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."² He thus rebuked the passion of lust: "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."³ He thus put down the passion of avarice: "Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."⁴ He thus forbade the love of one's kinsfolk: "If any man hate not his father and mother and all his kindred, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."⁵ He thus put aside all regard for temporal possessions: "Seek not your own."⁶ Moreover, He thus curbed the passion of pride: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."⁷ What a harsh demand is this, my

¹ Matt. v. 20.

² Matt. v. 39-41.

³ Matt. v. 28.

⁴ Luke xiv. 33.

⁵ Luke xiv. 26.

⁶ The reference seems to be to 1 Cor. x. 24.

⁷ Matt. xvi. 24.

father, almost beyond our power, and yet Christ wishes all these commands to be fulfilled, as He Himself says, "Unless your righteousness shall exceed, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."¹ But we fail to fulfil them, and, what is worse, they are so far absent from our lives, that it is superfluous even to recall any of them, especially as our actions are so utterly different. We lust after all things, we lose our tempers, we quarrel, we seize the goods of others, we claim our rights by lawsuits, we protect fraud and lying, we follow the flesh and its desires. We live for ourselves, we please ourselves, we fear to be conquered, we glory in conquering, we oppress others, we shrink from being oppressed, we envy others, we glory in our own success, we make merry and grow fat on the sweat of others, the whole world cannot hold our malice. Yet the apostle speaks thus: "Now there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong?"² And even though the Gospel may seem dead and impossible among us, let us at least think of Savigny³ and the monks of Clairvaux⁴ who lately came to us. How clearly the Gospel has come to life again in them, so that, if I may say so, it would be more profitable to imitate them than to read aloud the Gospel. For when the Gospel is read, it languishes among us even as something contemptible and dead, through the long lukewarmness of men—I might even call

¹ Matt. v. 20.

² 1 Cor. vi. 7.

³ Furness and Buildwas were founded by monks from Savigny. In 1147 Savigny and its daughter monasteries joined the Cistercian order.

⁴ Probably on their way to found Rievaulx.

them animals, since they do not perceive the things which are of the Spirit of God. But when we see the holy conversation of these monks, the Gospel seems as it were to live again in them. For they in very truth do not serve the false god Mammon. How firm they stand in the truth, and the truth has made them free.¹ They alone seek not their own, they alone possess nothing with which they could struggle to outshine their neighbours. They alone do not desire the property of their neighbours, but are content with the modest culture of the ground and the use of cattle. Even these things they wish to possess only while God wills, for when God wills to remove them they do not seek to recover them by law. In their case alone it is possible to say, "The world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world."² They alone can truly say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,"³—they who have no debtor from whom they wish to exact anything. Happy race of men whose habit, whose diet, whose entire life savours of the Gospel! God alone is their portion, so that they abide in God and God in them. They assuredly, as far as is in mortal power, can attain to the love of God and love of their neighbour, since they cling to God alone and have so utterly foregone all temporal goods except a moderate supply of food and a poor habit, that they desire nothing which could give any neighbour cause to be angry with them, so let us not think it impossible, my father, to keep the rule of the blessed Benedict, when God has supplied us with such examples, men who have set a pattern of so great virtues for us to follow. But if, because

¹ John viii. 32.

² Gal. vi. 14.

³ Matt. vi. 12.

of the neighbourhood of the city and the clamour of men, we should not be able altogether to imitate their purity, at least let us change the manner of our life and possessions in accordance with the rule of our profession ; otherwise we are not monks but dead men.'

In this way, then, did Prior Richard speak with Abbot Geoffrey concerning the reform of his monastery. The abbot was not over-pleased with what he said, for it is difficult to alter long-established habits at the sudden appearance of virtue. But as he admitted that he was not very quick in comprehension or very learned, he asked the prior to put down more plainly in writing how in their monastery such ideas could be carried out. Richard willingly agreed to this, and performed with no lack of zeal the task he had undertaken. So he wrote down that they should have no other conversation, no other dress, no other food, than such as the rule seemed to allow. He wrote down where the monastery ought to be built, and what exactly ought to be carried out in accordance with the rule. With regard to the site of the monastery he gave prudent advice as to the places in which the labour commanded by the rule could be most conveniently carried on. Indeed he so carefully explained the proper position and ordering of a monastery, that one might suppose that the rule could scarcely be kept better in a desert than in a city. With regard to possessions, being a man of experience in worldly matters, he made such just rules that even in this it seemed that the righteousness of the Gospel was hardly at any point transgressed. As for the income from churches and tithes for the acquisition of which

monks have generally been held to be blameworthy, it seemed that that had been done by the lawful and canonical decision of the bishops and that the money should not be expended except for the good of poor men, travellers, and guests. But he laid down the rule that monks should subsist on the lawful tillage of the earth and the keeping of flocks. Now when these things began to be spread among the other monks in the form of suspicions and rumours, a sudden madness seized them, and broke out into such malevolence, that they thought nothing but exile or close imprisonment was fit punishment for such a man and his friends. For they had violated not only their loyalty to their own monastery but also the ancient honour of Cluny, Marmouëtier,¹ Canterbury, Winchester, St. Alban's, and all the monasteries of their order. But Cluny² herself—I hope I shall give no offence by saying this—proved by a new change, that there were many of her institutions which thoroughly needed reform. And in my opinion, and I say it confidently, no Christian is so foolish or stupid as to dare to compare either Cluny or any other monastery of that order to the Cistercians in the observance of the rule and the Gospel.

Next the afore-mentioned prior with nineteen

¹ The largest of three abbeys founded by St. Martin of Tours, consequently called *Majus-monasterium*. It joined Cluny in 982.

² Cluny was founded in 909. All the monasteries colonized from it were closely dependent on the mother-house. In this they differed from ordinary Benedictine monasteries, which were self-governing. The reform mentioned above was that of Peter the Venerable, who was born about 1093 and became abbot of Cluny in 1122. He died in 1156. Thurstan retired to the Cluniac priory of St. John of Pontefract and died there.

others invited the abbot to a secret interview on a certain day, and asked him either to correct if possible the observance of the rule in his own monastery, or give an opportunity to those who wished by the grace of God to fulfil their profession. He replied that it was difficult for him to alter what his predecessors, nay, even the most ancient monasteries throughout the world, seemed to have upheld. In answer to this the prior and his companions set forth in a thousand ways, as above, that the sure and proper way of salvation for all monks was to steadily keep their profession in very truth. For nobody would consider abbots of Cluny or others like them to be better than or equal to the blessed Benedict, whose rule holy mother church had approved with such authority. In fact, most monks have of course made their profession, not according to the institutions of Cluny, but rather according to the rule of the blessed Benedict. And what could be imagined more stupid or more like the perversity of the Jews, than obstinately to defend all kinds of innovations which are contrary to the holy rule and to which no respect is due, and with such perversity to despise the most holy and evangelical rule of faith and profession? Moreover, St. Odo,¹ the only abbot of Cluny to compose a learned book, plainly calls that monk an apostate who in habit, diet, and other ways does not shrink from transgressing the rule of the blessed Benedict. For truly 'cursed is every man who transgresses the bounds laid down by our fathers.'²

¹ The second abbot and the author of the Cluniac constitution (see note on p. 153). He was born about 879 and died 942, having been abbot of Cluny from 926.

² The reference seems to be to Deut. xix. 14.

So after many friendly discussions the abbot saying that he wished to take good advice in this inquiry, delayed his final reply till after the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.¹ Meanwhile, the rest of the monks, filled with groundless fears lest they should be confined with a strictness beyond the ordinary rule, began to rage with hate against the prior and his companions after the manner of the Pharisees. And if it had not been that through the good offices of certain people a delay was interposed, the violence of the domestic persecution would have exceeded all bounds. Meanwhile, the rumour of internal strife began to circulate among the people of the town. We heard the talk of the crowd, but the real truth of the matter was unknown to us. But at this point Prior Richard took measures to inform us of the whole state of affairs, sometimes by monks, sometimes coming himself with the sub-prior and the secretary of the monastery. He asked for the mercy of the blessed Peter and of us, and begged that I would not refuse my kindly help in the observance of their vows. They declared that the need of it was even then urgent, especially as the monks had now vowed among themselves that whosoever should make any change in their religious profession should be cast out from their communion. Moreover, some of the prior's companions, moved by fear, or love, or vanity, were now turning back, and had not been able to make their peace otherwise than by confessing that they had sinned in making complaints about the observance of their vow.

So I, Thurstan, by God's grace called archbishop

¹ Sept. 8.

of York, hearing that the servants of Christ, according to the command of the blessed Benedict, desired to put nothing before the love of Christ, feared to be a stumbling-block to Christ's grace in them if I did not try to help their just desire with my episcopal mercy, as being one of those whose highest duty it is to provide for the religious peace of monks, and to comfort the oppressed in their need. Therefore, in accordance with the prudent counsel of some monks, I summoned Abbot Geoffrey and Prior Richard with his sub-prior to a convenient place, so that in the presence of these monks I might bring to a peaceful settlement the brethren's request and the abbot's reply. The former repeated with many tears their former petition, that they might follow Christ, who was poor, in voluntary poverty, and bear Christ's cross in their body, and not to be prevented from observing the peace of the Gospel and the rule of our blessed father Benedict. They asked the abbot's permission for this and his paternal help. But the abbot declared with tears that their work would be very necessary, and that he and the rest of the monks desired to observe no other than their established institutions. He promised that he would not hinder their vow, since it was sacred, but said that he dared not promise the help they asked without the knowledge of the chapter. Thereupon the abbot with his monks returned home, peace being made for the time, and a day appointed when I was to go to their chapter and in company of some monks discuss the matter with the abbot.

Meanwhile the rest of the monks strove all the more fiercely in their hatred against them, as they

more manifestly sought to fulfil their vow. They called together monks of Marmouëtier¹ and Cluny who were staying in our neighbourhood, so that, assisted by their presence and applause, they might expel the prior and his friends as deserters and violators of the common rule from all dignity and responsibility in the monastery. For, after the abbot, most of the responsibility devolved on them. This then was going on in the meanwhile.

I therefore on the appointed day prepared early in the day to go to the chapter of the monks, and I had almost reached the door, accompanied by some wise and religious men whose names are as follows: Hugh the dean,² William prior of the Canons Regular of Gisburn,³ William the treasurer,⁴ Hugo the archdeacon,⁵ Serlo a canon,⁶ William de Sainte Barbe a canon,⁷ Ansfrede my chaplain and a canon, Robert a priest of the hospital. Outside at the gate we left our horses with a very few men. Then, as I said, we were just entering the door of the chapter-house when the abbot met us at the door with monks who crowded the chapter-house, and forbade me to enter unless I would dismiss some of the clergy who came with me. Scarcely had I succeeded in replying that, without my clergy, who were good and wise men and

¹ There were priories colonized from this abbey at Allerton Mauleverer, near Whixley, and at Holy Trinity, York.

² He afterwards joined Fountains.

³ William de Brus.

⁴ William Fitzherbert, afterwards archbishop of York. We shall read more of him later.

⁵ Hugo Sotevagina, poet and historian. See Tanner's *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*, 683, and Wright's *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, ii. 314. ⁶ Page 184.

⁷ Soon after made dean of York and in 1143 bishop of Durham.

friendly to them, I could not fittingly enter upon so important an interview, when, behold, the whole chapter-house rang with such tumult and confusion that it seemed more like the seditious uproar of drunken revellers than the humility of monks of which there was no sign. Many of them rushed up and came upon us with outstretched arms as if to wrestle, and all cried out that they would be roused to fury if I entered.

Then I said, 'God is my witness that I was coming to you as a father, and had no thought of bringing any trouble upon you, but desired to bring peace among you and Christian brotherliness. But now, since you are endeavouring to take away from me what belongs to my authority and office as bishop, I also will take from you what is necessary to you. Let your church be interdicted.'

Then one of them, Simeon by name, cried out, 'Rather let our church be interdicted for a hundred years!' All applauded him and cried furiously, 'Seize them, seize them!' and taking the prior and his followers they began to drag them away, intending, according to the agreement they had made with each other, either to thrust them into prison or to cast them forth to exile. But they, having no other hope of escaping from the hands of their enemies, clung to me with all their strength, begging for security from the blessed Peter and from us. And so with difficulty we made our way back to the church, while the others shouted and roared even unto the church, 'Seize the rebels, take the traitors!' We sat down then in the church and the abbot with the rest of his monks returned to the chapter-house. Meanwhile the servants of the monastery, the doors and gates being shut,

stood and kept ambush at all the entrances. And we, fearing, to tell the truth, an attack of the monks, barred on the inside the door of the church which leads into the cloister. Meanwhile, news of the affair had gone abroad ; people came running up ; but no evil was said or done outside.

Since, therefore, it was impossible to restore peace among the monks, we returned home, taking with us the said thirteen monks. Twelve were priests and one a sub-deacon. Many of them were learned men, and all were seeking the true observance both of their rule and profession, and of the Gospel. And so they are lodged in the house of the blessed Peter¹ and of us, not to be deterred, they declare, from their purpose by the violent opposition of any man. But the monks of the abbey are still giving way to their rage and hatred. The abbot has set out on a journey, I know not with what intent.

I have given you a wordy and perhaps a wearisome account, because it seemed to me necessary that the state of affairs, which will hardly be pleasing in the eyes of other monks, shall be set forth in full, lest an erroneous account should be spread by the report of enemies. And with regard to these matters, I adjure you, O father, for Christ's sake, to support by your authority the cause of those who wish to change to a safer and a stricter life. If their abbot comes to you, recall him, by the wisdom vouchsafed you, to peace, and admonish him not to stand in the way of the holy purpose of his sons. But if he has already come and gone, I ask you to send him by the messenger who brings this a letter exhorting him

¹ York Minster was dedicated to St. Peter.

not to oppose them persistently, but rather to give assistance and opportunity to those who wish to obey in very truth the Gospel of Christ and the rule of the blessed Benedict. The abbot and monks ought at least to imitate in this matter the Egyptians and Babylonians who allowed the children of Israel to go back to the land of promise. Likewise Laban, when Jacob secretly fled from his enmity, first cruelly pursued him, but then let him return to his father. Moreover, these men should not be regarded as turning away from their vow, but as looking forward, since they are leaving a place where the opportunity of sin is too great and desire to serve God in more security. Christ Himself should hold the abbot back seeing that He rebuked the Pharisees because they neither go in themselves, neither suffer others to go in.¹ It is surely well known that the rule of the blessed Benedict has almost throughout the world of monks lost in the sight of all its place and position, so that no one can wonder enough who it is that dares to profess with such solemnity before God and His saints what he daily neglects or, to tell the truth, is compelled not to observe. He falls under the condemnation of those in very truth of whom the prophet saith, 'This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.'² And the apostle saith, 'They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.'³

But it may be that, since many act in this way, continual habit breeds recklessness. Whereas if only a few had thus presumed, I call the conscience of all wise men to bear me out most certainly

¹ Matt. xxiii. 13.

² Isa. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 8; Mark vii. 6. ³ Titus i. 16.

in saying that they would have been considered to have deviated from and deserted the holy rule. But, though I grieve to say it, the recklessness of these monks is ill-founded, most clearly ill-founded, since a multitude of sinners brings no impunity for sin. Wherefore those who wish to observe the rule of their profession ought not to be opposed but protected, nor should they be blamed because for that reason they hasten to change their home. For 'God is not chosen for the sake of the place, but the place for the sake of God'.¹ And the blessed Benedict clearly proves that 'in every place one God is served, all fight for one king'.² And moreover, in the Collections of the fathers,³ Joseph the hermit fully sets forth that that man most justly keeps the faith of his profession who establishes himself in that place where the precepts of the faith of our Lord can most perfectly be kept. Indeed, He wishes us to seek for holy trial, for He is our help in trials and tribulations. But they, if I mistake not, should be condemned as Pharisees or heretics who neither fear nor allow others to fear what He that is the Truth saith, 'Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.'⁴ For if an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than Christ preached, let him be accused.⁵ And surely that man preaches otherwise than Christ preached who tries to hinder those who try to observe the peace of the Gospel and the rule of their profession. Whoever he is, he must with all our might be

¹ St. Bernard.

² *Rule of St. Benedict*, chap. lxi.

³ *Cassiani Collat. Patrum Deserti*, xvii. 2.

⁴ Matt. v. 20.

⁵ Gal. i. 8.

brought to naught, for He that is the Truth says, 'If thy eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee.'¹ Nothing in the body gives more pain when it is hurt or is more carefully guarded than the eye; but when it is a hindrance, it must be through the spirit plucked out. So surely the watcher of souls, or whatever we hold very dear,—this we mean by the eye—must, if it is a stumbling block in the way of keeping the truth, be guarded against for God's sake. For this it is to have the wisdom of the serpent, namely, to keep one's whole head, that is one's mind, from the falseness which hurts the soul. But because of the scandal in the eyes of the weak, who have small knowledge of the truth, we ask your Holiness and all who have listened to our petition, to labour to restore peace between the abbot of York and these oft-mentioned monks. Finally, we ought to remember that a similar secession of monks from Molesme founded and established that perfect rule of Cistercian life which is now the marvel of almost the whole church. Its character for purity was praised with Christian piety by Father Hugo, archbishop of Lyons, who faithfully determined that the holy rule should be restored in most perfect entirety. And in the last place, since the complaint of the malicious monks has come to the notice of the apostolic see, over which Pope Urban II presides, a mandate and decree have gone forth, that the abbot himself should return to the rule of his abbey, from which he had departed as much as any one, and that none of the rest who had wished to live in the absolute observance of their rule should suffer any hindrance or violence.

¹ Matt. v. 20.

It is clearer than light, how in their excellent lives the truth of the whole Gospel has shone forth.

May your Holiness be strong in Christ.

The persistence of the abbot that the monks should return.

The abbot still persisted in worrying the servants of God through messengers, now with threats, now with warnings, so that he might recall those who had gone away, bring back the fugitives, and restore them to the monastery. But they remained quite immovable, deaf to his enchantments, and, like rolling wheels, when they revolved they turned not back. They steadfastly set their face to go to Jerusalem.¹ They entered into a compact with their souls, made firm their purpose, and walking before their Lord's face, stopped their ears that they might not hear the seductive voices of the Sibyls.² Meanwhile, they remained with the bishop in his palace, free from toil but not idle in their freedom, and having leisure for vigils and prayers, they made up in tears for the labour of their hands, and anticipated in the city the fast-days of solitude. But alas, no place is safe from temptation while we live here on earth.

Two monks who looked back.

The tempter appeared, who had looked with malice on the first happy steps of their advance. He approached two of the brothers, Gervase and Ralph, who perhaps had not completely armed

¹ Luke ix. 51.

² The chronicler was probably thinking of the Sirens.

themselves with the shield of faith and prayer. He whispered in their ear poisonous ideas, suggested treacherous thoughts, such as the austerity of the order, the horror of solitude, the weakness of the body, the habits of their former life. He pointed out the steepness of the ascent, the seriousness of a slip, that their position was one of danger, that novelties are always suspect. He urged them to return to their former ways, to be reconciled to their brethren, to be satisfied with their former mediocrity, since safety lies ever in the mean; nor, he said, are you better than your fathers.¹ It is surely a hard thing to live in the desert, to leave what you are accustomed to, to urge the human frame beyond its powers, and to be unmoved by the tortures of the flesh. What then? They yielded to the temptation, returned to their flesh-pots, and by turning back became a stumbling-block to their friends, and a scorn to their enemies. But Gervase, finding strength again after his fall, rose up mightier, like a soldier after flight. He returned to the camp, joined his brethren, and wiped off the stain of his apostacy by a new conversion of his way of life. But Ralph resumed his slack existence, and did not afterwards rise up again. He made a compact with the flesh and his belly clave unto the ground.²

The grant of a monastery and the election of an abbot.

Meanwhile the day of our Lord's birth drew nigh, and the venerable archbishop with his company went up to Ripon to celebrate a feast of such solemnity. There, during the sacred celebration,

¹ 1 Kings xix. 4.

² Gen. iii. 14.

he granted to them by the grace of God a place of habitation in the estate of the blessed Peter, a place uninhabited for all the centuries back, thick set with thorns, lying between the slopes of mountains and among rocks jutting out on both sides ; fit rather, it seemed, to be the lair of wild beasts than the home of human beings. Its name was Skeldale,¹ that is, the valley of the stream which runs down through it. And the blessed archbishop added one village with the adjacent lands named Sutton.² This was the beginning of our mother abbey which is now called Fountains. After the gift of the place was solemnly and fittingly confirmed, they discussed among themselves the election of an abbot who could go in and out before God as father and shepherd of their souls. The holy archbishop was present, and in an election carried out in due order they chose by the vote and wish of all alike Prior Richard to be their abbot. The archbishop consented to their choice, confirmed the election, blessed the man, and here was the first abbot of Fountains. But what was the man of God to do ? He had monks but no home. There was no place where he could take refuge ; ‘ he had not where to lay his head,’³ no place where he could escape the severity of storms ; and it was then winter. But he did what he could in accordance with the office he had undertaken, and casting his care upon the Lord, girded himself with the fullness of faith against the trials of poverty. He put his trust in the help of God, and, having

¹ Skel is the Saxon word for a spring.

² Sutton Grange is about two miles to the north-west of Ripon.

³ Matt. viii. 20.

received the bishop's blessing, retired with his holy brotherhood to the depths of solitude. A sight full of piety it was to see men of such great faith, such great ardour, that not even the inclemency of winter, nor the horror of solitude, nor the lack of all comforts, could turn them from their purpose or delay their undertakings. There was no money in their purses, no corn in their barns, nothing for their daily food, except what the liberality of the bishop provided for them. They had no home to live in, no place to sojourn in, no protection against the inclemency of the weather except such as the overhanging rocks on each side afforded them.

The elm.

There was an elm in the middle of the valley, with luxuriant foliage after the manner of that kind of tree, which with its leafage tempered for the beasts which lay beneath it the cold in winter and the heat in summer. Hither the holy men betook themselves to seek a lodging beneath its shelter. The tree stood in the midst and they lay around it, with straw and litter strewn over them, protecting themselves in any way they could from the severity of the winter. The elm still lives unhurt with its green leaves and thick foliage to make a later generation believe from what a humble state sprang the foundations of our mother abbey, that is, the church of Fountains. There were no hewn logs, no worked stones, but a poor cottage like a shepherd's hut, covered in above with mere turf. This thing was surely memorable—the sight of Christ's soldiers in their first campaign bearing

themselves with such confidence and passing the winter in their tents, triumphing by the constancy of their faith over the world itself and the prince of the world.¹ All slept under one elm, all lay beneath one elm, a brotherhood poor but mighty in the Lord, twelve priests and one levite. The holy bishop supplied them with bread, the neighbouring stream with drink. At night they rose according to custom for the night office, sang the psalms according to the rule, addressed themselves earnestly to prayer, and called each other by mutual exhortation to the praise of God. By day they girded themselves to labour, some plaiting mats, others gathering from the neighbouring wood branches to build a chapel; others, still more prudent, turned their energies to cultivating a garden. No one there could eat the bread of idleness, nor indulge in rest till worn out with toil. They came hungry to the table and tired to bed, never satisfied, but never murmuring. There was no visible sign of gloom, no sound of murmuring, but they blessed God with all their hearts, being poor in worldly goods but mighty in faith.

They submit themselves to the Cistercian order and the monastery of Clairvaux.

Having passed the winter in their tents, they discussed among themselves their position, their manner of life, the form of their discipline. For they did not think it right to follow the guidance of their own feelings and trust themselves to their own opinions, lest perchance they should be led away by the spirit of error. They all approved

¹ John xii. 31.

of the holy simplicity of the Cistercian order, both because of the purity of its life and the frailty of man's living, and especially because they saw no more direct way towards the perfection of the life of salvation. So, in accordance with the general wish, they sent messengers to the holy Abbot Bernard, telling him that they had chosen Clairvaux to be their mother, and himself to be their father, that they would be subject to his advice in all things, and would obey his commands. But in order that they might receive from him a rule of life and the discipline of holy religion, they wrote him an account of the manner and cause of their secession from the monastery of York, the wakening of their conscience, their purpose of living differently, the persecutions of the abbot, the generosity of the bishop. The holy bishop also wrote for them, setting forth their case, and recommending their persons, as members of Christ, as it were sacred vessels of the house of the Lord. The holy man received the messengers with much devotion, and having fully heard their business, rejoiced and gave thanks to God. He considered that this work was done through a wisdom greater than man's, seeing that it could not be destroyed by such powerful attempts. Without delay, then, he gave his consent to their petition, approved their purpose, exhorted them to courage, and wrote them a comforting letter in these terms :

The letter of the blessed Bernard to Abbot Richard and his comrades.

To the most excellent and well-beloved brethren, Abbot Richard and those with him, Brother Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux sends greeting in the Lord.

What great things we have heard and learned, and our brothers G. and W.¹ have told us, how you have grown hot again with the fire of God, grown strong from weakness, bloomed afresh in new holiness! 'This is the finger of God,'² working subtly a wholesome change, not turning bad men into good, but good men into better. Who will grant me the boon of going over to see this great sight! For the latter change is not less marvellous and pleasing than the former; in fact you will more easily find many worldly men turned to the right way than a single monk going over to a better. A most rare bird on the earth is a man who advances even a little from the stage he has once reached in religion. And so your deed, my well-beloved, which is as notable as it is profitable, delights not only ourselves who wish to be the servants of your holiness, but the whole kingdom of God; for the more rare is such an event, the more gladly is it to be received. It was certainly necessary for your security to go beyond that mediocrity, which is the next thing to sin, and to avoid the lukewarmness which makes God to vomit;³ but it was also your duty to do so for the sake of conscience. You have found out whether it is safe for those who have made profession according to the

¹ Geoffrey and William.

² Exod. viii. 19.

³ Rev. iii. 16.

rule to remain short of its purity. I grieve much that, as unkind time presses and the messenger is in haste, I am forced to express to you my full affection with the pen of an exile, and compress it into a short letter. Brother Geoffrey will fill up with word of mouth what is lacking.

The letter of St. Bernard to Thurstan, Archbishop of York, praising in him the zeal for righteousness, the love of religion, the defence of the poor

To the very dear father and reverend lord, Thurstan, by the grace of God archbishop of York, brother Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, wishes the fullest health.

Magnificence of action and fragrance of reputation have united, I understand, to make you glorious. Your action proves that your reputation was neither false nor empty, since what was formerly spread abroad by flying rumour appears manifest in very deed. Now your zeal for justice has shone out resplendently, your episcopal power has grown mighty and powerful in the defence of the poor, and the poor who had no helper. Even of old the whole church of the saints was wont to tell of your deeds of mercy and your alms-giving. But this virtue you share with many, since it is required equally from all who possess this world's goods. But this deed of yours is truly episcopal, is a notable example of paternal love. This is the divine fervour with which the Lord for the protection of his poor doubtless set on fire your zeal. He 'who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire'.¹ All this, I say, has been added to your

¹ Ps. civ. 4.

dignity as a special glory, a badge of office, an ornament of your crown. It is one thing to fill the belly of the hungry, another to be zealous for holy poverty. For one is a service to nature, the other to grace. 'Thou shalt visit thy kind,' He saith, 'and shalt not sin.'¹ Therefore the man who feeds another's body avoids sinning. But the man who honours another's piety, is profitable to himself. And so He saith, 'Keep thine alms in thine hand, till thou findest a righteous man to whom to give.' With what result? 'He that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.'² Let us pay nature her due and sin not. Let us be the helpers of grace that we may be sharers in it. In you we so marvel at both these graces that we confess that both have been given you from above, and we pray that whatever you grant us in our necessities from your worldly goods may be for ever mingled with divine praises, O worthily loved and honoured father.

*The letter of Bernard to Geoffrey, Abbot of York, in reply to some questions*³

To the venerable Geoffrey, abbot of the monastery of St. Mary of York, Brother Bernard, called abbot of Clairvaux, sends greeting in the Lord.

It has pleased your reverence to send to your humble servant letters in which you wished to consult me with regard to certain difficulties. But to these questions and to questions of the same

¹ Job. v. 24.

² Matt. x. 41.

³ The letter which follows this comes before it in order of time.

sort we shrink from giving a definite reply in proportion as we are uncertain of the divine will. Like men, we closely regard the minds of our neighbours, and if we see anything which they do not wish we are afraid of offending them. This happens most easily to those whose conscience is as it were distracted by the pangs of a sensitive mind and tries to satisfy the difficult and tortuous reasonings of its own impurity. But such a conscience punishes itself for its blindness, since, while in its actions it strives to flatter, the sting of truth revisits it, and it is pierced and tormented in its memory. This difficulty the Psalmist bewailed when he prayed and said, 'Bring my soul out of prison, O Lord, that I may praise thy name.'¹ Do not then, good sir, accuse me of dissimulation and craft, if I am unable to reply as fully as you wish to your inquiries, or if I am able to somewhat, yet dare not express myself in full.

Your letter in the first place started with complaints, namely, that it is a grievous misfortune in your old age that some of your monks have presumed to go over to a stricter and safer way of life. Whereas you have rather to fear because the sorrow of this world worketh death.

If reason is to prevail in the thoughts of men, then they surely should not grieve when a man tries to cling more closely to the laws of his Creator. And we are hardly watching over our flock with paternal solicitude if we look askance at the progress of our sons. And if in this you wish to choose me out of a thousand for your counsellor and indeed are set upon doing so, then in my opinion you ought to make it your aim to provide

¹ Ps. cxlii. 7.

that those of your sons who remain with you in mediocrity should not fail from well-doing; and as for the rest who are afraid for their conscience sake to remain short of the purity of their profession, and are striving to ascend from the vow of religion which they once undertook to yet higher things, these, as the prophet said, you should go to meet with bread.¹ You should watch most vigilantly over the one party lest they turn aside to destruction, and offer your kindly help to the other party that they may go forward to their crown. For the men who have in their hearts the desire to rise and go on from virtue to virtue, deserve for their reward to see the God of gods in Sion, and to see Him with the more happiness, the more closely they strove to cling to the highest good in the pure ordering of their religious life.

Finally, with regard to the two monks, Gervase and Ralph, who departed with the others, assisted by the paternal and episcopal help of Archbishop Thurstan, and were dismissed, as you yourself testify, with your absolution, I am sure that, if they had remained in that state of purity to which they had risen, they would have acted not sinfully, but laudably. And I am no less certain that if they will go back to the state of purity from which they rashly departed, they will deserve more praise for their virtue than do soldiers who return to the battle after a cowardly flight, and win glory in proportion to the eagerness with which after their disgrace they come back to the hope of victory. And in my opinion the absolution which has been pronounced can certainly be set aside, but in the eyes of the omnipotent God it cannot be made void.

¹ Isa. xxi. 14.

In the next place, you confess that the life they desire is the more holy, but you say that because of the weakness of the flesh and the love for their kindred they cannot endure the difficulties of the narrow way. Moreover you add that their presence will be necessary to you, and so you earnestly inquire whether they can remain without guilt in the monastery from which, not without scandal, they departed. I reply that the Gospel rings with the command that we are to avoid all kinds of scandal, to pluck out utterly for Christ's sake the affections of the flesh, to flee with all our strength from worldly pleasures for the sake of our souls' salvation. The whole series of the scriptures cries this out to us, and to be ignorant of it is not so much sinful as heretical. Indeed I am not convinced that a return such as theirs could be declared guiltless. For it is a dangerous thing and comes nigh to grievous disaster, to presume on the mercy of God in opposition to his justice, and to defend the one against the other. The scripture saith, 'Add not sin upon sin,' and you would reply, 'The mercy of God is great.'¹ It is a poor method of reasoning in which small things are of more account than great or bad things are compared with good.

And next you vehemently urge, 'How do they deserve to be called apostates, if they return to their monastery and strive in right ways to fulfil their profession?' I reply that I ought not to condemn them. 'The Lord knoweth them that are his,'² and 'Every man shall bear his own burden'.³ God who judgeth, will know him whom the darkness covers not; the sinner shall be taken

¹ Ecclus. v. 5.² 2 Tim. ii. 19.³ Gal. vi. 5.

in the works of his hands. Let each man decide for himself what is good for him, I will only tell you what I think of my own case. I, Bernard, if I had freely, of my own will and deed, turned from good things to better or from dangerous things to greater safety, and afterwards had presumed by an unlawful decision to return again to the things I had left, I should be fearful of becoming, not only an apostate, but even unfit for the kingdom of God. This also the blessed Gregory saith, 'Whoever sets before himself a greater good, makes unlawful for himself that lesser good which formerly was lawful; for it is written, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."¹ And a man is convicted of looking back if, after devoting himself to a loftier pursuit, he leaves the greater good and turns again to the lesser.'²

As to what you have been pleased to mention about excommunication, it seems to me that it is not your business to go into the matter nor mine to decide it. For even the law does not judge a man unless it has first heard him, and it is a rash thing to pronounce judgement against the absent.

*Another letter from the same Saint to the same
Abbot Geoffrey of York³*

To the venerable Geoffrey, abbot of St. Mary of York, Brother Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, sends greeting in the Lord.

In letters from over the sea you ask me for

¹ Luke ix. 62.

² *Regulae pastoralis liber*, Pars tertia, cap. xxvii.

³ This letter precedes the last one in point of time.

counsel which I would rather that you had sought from another. I am in a strait betwixt two.¹ If I am silent, my silence will as it were sound like contempt. On the other hand, any reply that I make will, as far as I can see, be dangerous, for whatever I say will certainly cause a scandal for some one, or give some one more encouragement than he deserves in some action in which he ought not to be encouraged. As for the secession of your brethren, it did not take place through my advice and exhortation, or, to my knowledge, through that of my associates. But we believe that the thing was of God because it could not be hindered even by such mighty efforts. We believe too that these very brethren feel this to be true, who are asking from us counsel concerning themselves, seeing that their conscience is pricking them for turning back. But blessed are those who, in the words of the apostle, condemn not themselves in that thing which they allow.²

But now that you have asked me, how shall I contrive to give offence to no one, either by my reply or by my silence? Perhaps I may succeed if I send those who inquire of me to a wiser man, one whose authority is more revered and more holy. The sainted Pope Gregory says in his pastoral book, 'Whoever sets before himself a greater good, makes unlawful for himself that lesser good which formerly was lawful.' To confirm this, he adds the testimony of the Gospel which says, 'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'³ And he goes on, 'A man is convicted of looking back, if, after

¹ Phil. i. 23.

² Rom. xiv. 22.

³ Luke ix. 62.

devoting himself to a loftier pursuit, he leaves the greater good and turns again to the lesser.’¹ Again, he says in his third homily on Ezekiel, ‘There are some men who do the good indeed which they know and, while they are doing it, think of better things; but they reject the better things which they contemplated and change not. So they do the good which they began, but fall back from those better things which they had contemplated. Surely these, in the judgement of men, are according to their works innocent, but in the eyes of the omnipotent God are according to their thoughts guilty.’²

Behold the mirror. Let them regard in it, not the face of their new birth but the fact of their back-sliding. Let this be the ground of their decision and judgement with their own thoughts as their accusers or defenders, and the judge he that is spiritual, ‘who judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.’³ For I will not rashly decide which is greater or less, higher or lower, more or less strict, that which they left or this to which they have returned. Let them see to it themselves. They have Gregory to help them.

But to you, holy father, I will say in confident certainty and naked truth, that it is by no means profitable to try to quench the spirit. For it says, ‘Do not hinder the man who can do well; do well, if thou canst, thyself.’⁴

You ought to glory in the progress of your sons more than ‘a father glorieth in a wise son’.⁵ For the rest, I trust that none will be offended because

¹ *Regulae pastoralis liber*, Pars tertia, cap. xxvii.

² Book I, Homily iii. 18.

³ 1 Cor. ii. 15.

⁴ Prov. iii. 27.

⁵ Prov. x. 1.

I have not hidden in my heart the righteousness of God, though for the avoidance of scandal I have spoken less strongly perchance than it behoved me.

*The monk of Clairvaux whom Saint Bernard
sent to the Monastery of Fountains*

When all this had been accomplished, the messengers who had been sent to Clairvaux returned with letters from the holy abbot. They had in their company a certain monk from the monastery of Clairvaux called Geoffrey,¹ a holy and religious man. There can be no doubt of the perfection of one who was so greatly valued by the blessed Benedict, and sent from his side to our fathers to establish them in the first principles of the order, the manner of life, and mode of conduct, according to the discipline of the order. I saw the man when I was still in my secular habit. He was of a great age and a modest gravity, a man strenuous in matters human and divine. He set in order and established many monasteries, especially those whose members by the counsel of the holy man changed their habit for the greater perfection of their life and submitted themselves to the monastery of Clairvaux. In connexion with him I cannot be silent, digression though it be, about a certain memorable event.

There was a monastery, the name of which escapes me, which was to be newly set in order and regulated; and the brothers of it changed their habit for the greater purity of their order and submitted themselves to the discipline of the holy church of Clairvaux. And they sent messen-

¹ Geoffrey de Amayo.

gers to ask that some one should be sent to them to explain the way of salvation. The holy abbot consented, and calling Geoffrey, said, 'Go with these men and teach them what thou knowest.' He undertook the labour commanded him, but unwillingly, saying that for many years now he had been worn out with old age, that the time of his release drew near, and that he wished to have his burial-place at Clairvaux. 'Go,' said the saint, 'fear not; I will bury thee here.' And so it was. When his work was completed he returned to Clairvaux, and after his return fell ill and his disease grew heavy upon him. So when all the due ceremonies had been performed by the abbot he was laid to rest beside his fathers.

This Geoffrey, as we have said, came to Fountains, and was received by the brothers with reverence and fit honour. All were comforted at his arrival, and when they heard the message of the holy abbot they bowed their necks to the Cistercian yoke, hearing the word from the lips of the old man and keeping it. According to his counsel they built huts, established workshops, singing and chanting as he taught them. They received with reverence the holy message, and, as heated wax takes the impression of the seal, so they took the form of the holy institution. The man of Burgundy marvelled to find in Englishmen such frugality, such swift obedience, such abstinence in diet, such gravity of manners. He found them 'strong in faith, rooted in charity, patient in hope, most long-suffering in poverty'. Meanwhile the number of the brethren increased. Seven clerics and ten laymen joined them and were received as novices according to the discipline of the order.

But their possessions did not as yet grow. They acquired no lands and had scarcely any means of subsistence except what they received from the holy bishop.

The famine

It happened after some time that famine grew in our borders and the holy men were greatly straitened. They had no bread to eat, no money to buy it; there was no corn in their barns, and a great crowd of poor men thronged to them. The abbot went round the district to seek food for the brothers and there was none to give it them, nor had he any place whence he could obtain it. Everywhere was scarcity; their plans were all uncertain. They were in a gloomy place, settled in the wilderness without food, in a place altogether impossible. Finally they were driven to the last stage of want, and picking the leaves from the trees and gathering some lowly field herbs they added a little salt and cooked pottage for the sons of the prophets. That elm under which they had long been settled afforded them two benefits, shelter in winter, food in summer. So lived these holy men, once used to luxury, eating bread by weight and pottage by measure; and in truth it was bitter enough. 'There was death in the pot,'¹ but the flour of faith was added and sweetened as it were the bitterness of the diet. These were our first fathers who in grievous poverty planted our vine and in the sweat of their brow laid up for us the sufficiency we have to-day. They considered that they lived not for themselves but

¹ 2 Kings iv. 40.

for posterity, and comforted themselves for their want of worldly goods with the thought of the race that would be born, clearly proving to posterity how great are the merits of holy poverty in the sight of God since it deserved to be thus exalted.

The bread given to the traveller

About that time a traveller one day knocked at the gate, shouting and asking for charity in the name of Christ. The porter replied that he had no bread. The poor man begged more persistently and pleaded his want and the danger of starvation. He was very poor, it seemed, and worn out with hunger. He refused to go away till he had received charity, urging and beseeching in the name of Christ that he should be given bread. The porter thus entreated went to the holy abbot, saying that a stranger stood at the gate, worn out with hunger and importunately seeking alms, but that he had nothing to give to the beggar. The abbot was moved by the cry of the poor man, and, calling the brother who had charge of the provisions, asked him to bestow charity on the suppliant. He replied that he had nothing for the food of the whole family but two loaves and a half, and these must be given to the carpenters who were just coming in for their meal. 'Give one loaf,' said the abbot, 'to the poor man, keep one and a half for the workmen. As for us, let God provide as He will.' The man took the loaf and departed. And lo, there stood before the gate two men from a neighbouring castle called Knaresbrough, bringing with them a wagon laden with loaves of fine wheat flour.

For a nobleman, Eustace,¹ son of John, had heard that the brothers were distressed through want and sent them charity from his table. Truly God was good and faithful in His promises, seeing that in return for one loaf of coarse flour He gave so many of fine meal. It was announced to the abbot and brethren, who recognized it as the gift of God and blessed the name of the Lord who giveth meat to them that fear Him.² So by the care of God and the ministrations of their faithful neighbours, they passed the summer in great poverty and steadfast patience. When the time of renewal was at hand, they gathered up the harvest and carried it into their barns, little enough for the support of the monastery, for it was not possible to reap much where not much had been sown.

The unexpected help

So they laboured for two years under a heavy load of poverty, and with no hope of comfort save that the hand of the Lord cannot fail them that put their trust in Him.³ The abbot, now almost despairing, went to the monastery of Clairvaux. He set forth their critical condition of poverty and the inconvenience of the place they were living in, and asked that he and his brothers might be received in that neighbourhood, seeing that in their own place they had now no hope of prospering. The holy Abbot Bernard was moved by this to compassion, and, after taking counsel with his

¹ He was nephew and heir of Serlo de Burgh, the founder of Knaresbrough Castle. He founded monasteries at Malton, Alnwick, and Watton.

² Ps. cxi. 1. ³ Ps. xvii. 7.

monks, decided to grant them a certain grange belonging to his monastery called Longué, which has now been turned into an abbey, and the adjacent lands, as a place of retreat till he could make more satisfactory provision for them elsewhere. But the Lord had provided better for them, granting through His wondrous kindness that Clairvaux should keep its farm and that the feeling of compassion in the monks of Clairvaux should be counted to them for good, but that help for Christ's servants in their need should come from another source. When the abbot was still busy across the sea, it happened that a nobleman, Hugh, dean of York, fell ill. He was a man of great possessions and enriched by many labours. God sent into his heart the good thought that for the redemption of his soul he ought to betake himself with all his goods to the monastery of Fountains. And so it was done. Now the man was rich, not only in actual money and furniture but in books of the holy scriptures, which by the guidance of God he had collected with much care and expense. He was the first who by a happy omen enriched the little library of Fountains. The brethren were comforted by these events, and seeing that it was the gift of God made a prudent disposition of the money he had brought them. First a part was dedicated to the use of the poor, another part was set aside for the building, the rest was reserved for the needs of the monks in the monastery. When the abbot returned he found matters in a better condition, the brothers for the time more prosperous, and the whole state of his monastery changed for the better.

Canon Serlo

And God added more blessings. A certain cleric, named Serlo, canon of York minster, was sick unto death. Now he was a man of great wealth, rich in the possession of silver and gold. When he was arranging his affairs he was touched by the inspiration of God and betook himself with all his goods to Fountains and there died. Not long afterwards, another canon of York, named Tosti, a rich man with plenty of money, joined the holy brotherhood, bringing with him all his substance. He was received as a novice and lived in the monastery for some years, following the discipline of the order. He was a pleasant and sociable companion, and, when his course was run, fell asleep in a good old age.

How the village of Herleshow was added to the Monastery of Fountains

After some time a certain knight of that neighbourhood, Robert de Sartis, took to himself to wife a certain woman named Raganilda, and with her certain lands which fell to her by right of inheritance. These two were both inspired by the counsel of God and, by a solemn gift in accordance with the wish and grant of both, made over to Fountains the village which was called Herleshow,¹ with the adjacent land and the forest called

¹ Herleshow was the district close to the abbey, deriving its name from the how or hill which is so prominent. It is now called How Hill, people having forgotten that the two words mean the same thing.

Warsall.¹ They were buried at Fountains in the sepulchre of the just, and their memory is held blessed among us.

*How Cayton came into the possession of the
Monastery of Fountains*

There was at that time a young man of the king's household named Serlo de Pembroke, who had in our neighbourhood a certain village called Cayton,² which he had received by the gift of the king. He fell ill and summoned the holy abbot of Fountains, and being on the point of death made over to the monastery of Fountains by a solemn grant the village which he held by the gift of the king, for the monks to possess for ever. The king confirmed the grant and the village was turned into a grange, which is most useful to this day for the support of the monastery. This same Serlo died at Fountains and had his sepulchre among the saints. Not long afterwards the abbot acquired³ Aldburgh, with its appurtenances, a fertile grange and well adapted for cultivation.

From that day and henceforth God blessed our valleys 'with the blessings of heaven above and blessings of the deep that lieth under'.⁴ He multiplied the number of the brethren and added to their possessions, spreading out his vine and watering it with showers of blessing. So it sent its root downwards and bore fruit above,⁵ growing

¹ Warsall lies a little west of Fountains.

² Close to South Stainley, about three miles south of Fountains.

³ Aldburgh is near Masham. It belonged to Roger de Mowbray.

⁴ Gen. xlix. 25.

⁵ 2 Kings xix. 30.

day by day and ever becoming stronger, till in a little while it became a great vine. And the Lord was a wall to it on the right hand and on the left.¹ He suffered no man to do them wrong;² their cattle were not diminished; He blessed the work of their hands; their possessions grew upon the earth. Many men came to them, 'whose hearts God had touched,'³ and, putting off the old man, were born again to be new creatures. The house grew outwardly in possessions, but yet more inwardly in sanctity; and its name became famous and the great ones of the earth revered it.

About this time I, Serlo, saying farewell to the world, betook myself to Fountains to put on the habit of the holy life. Good God, what perfection of life was there at Fountains! What rivalry in virtue! What zeal for the order! What a pattern of discipline! For our early fathers departed from a wealthy monastery, but they made up for all that worldly riches by the abundance of their virtues. They became a spectacle to angels and to men,⁴ and studied from the first to leave to their successors that rule of holy religion which by the favour of God remains to this day unimpaired.

The foundation of Newminster

In the fifth year after the foundation of our mother, the monastery of Fountains, a nobleman, Ralph de Merlay, came to visit it. Seeing the life of the brethren the man was touched, and by the inspiration of God and for the redemption of his soul granted them a site on his estate to build

¹ Exod. xiv. 22.

² Ps. cv. 14.

³ 1 Sam. x. 26.

⁴ 1 Cor. iv. 9.

a monastery. The holy abbot accepted his offering, and when buildings had been raised there according to custom, he established an abbey which he called Newminster.¹ This was the first daughter of the holy church of Fountains, the only child as yet of her mother. In the sixth year of her foundation, in the first month and the fifth day of the month, that is in the Nones of January, a brotherhood was sent from Fountains to Newminster, with an abbot, Robert, a holy and religious man, once a monk of Whitby, who had joined himself to them when they seceded from the monastery of York. We have heard many things of this man worthy of narration, which shall be duly dealt with. He was modest in demeanour, gentle in company, merciful in judgement, notable for his holy life. For many years he was the head and helper of the brethren, an affectionate father and an excellent shepherd, and then completed his holy life with a more holy death. The holy Godric, as may be read in his life,² saw one night, while he prayed, the soul of this saint freed from the flesh and borne into heaven by the hands of angels. Thus Newminster took its origin. This was the first shoot which our vine put forth; this was the first swarm which went out from our hive. The holy seed sprouted in the soil and, being cast as it were in the lap of fertile earth, grew to a great plant, and from a few grains there sprang a plentiful harvest. This newly founded monastery rivalled her mother in fertility. She conceived and brought forth three daughters, Pipewell, Sawley, and Roche.³

¹ Close to Morpeth.

² *Publications of the Surtees Society*, vol. xx.

³ Pipewell is near Kettering, Sawley is on the Ribble

The foundation of Kirkstead

God added new blessings to our Fountains and spread wide the vine, which he had planted, in the diocese of Lincoln. A nobleman named Hugh, son of Endo, had vowed to build a monastery of the Cistercian order. He ordered the holy abbot of Fountains to be summoned, and on his advice divided his inheritance with the Lord and consecrated to divine use a certain fit place called Kirkstead.¹

The foundation of the monastery of Louth Park

At the same time Alexander of blessed memory, the bishop of Lincoln, moved by a sort of pious emulation, gave over into the hands of the same abbot of Fountains, after a solemn consecration, a place called Haverholme,² to build an abbey of the Cistercian order. The abbot received the gifts of those who offered, and taking God for his help started the work. He sent brothers to the several places, constructed buildings, set up storehouses. When matters were thus set in order for the time, a suitable brotherhood was appointed for each place. In the seventh year of the foundation of the monastery of Fountains two brotherhoods of monks were sent forth on one day, namely on the second of February, the one to the monastery of Kirkstead under Abbot Robert de Sewell, the other to Haverholme under Abbot Gervase. And

near Clitheroe, Roche is between Bawtry and Rotherham. Nothing remains of Pipewell.

¹ Near Woodhall Spa.

² Near Sleaford.

both these were among our first fathers who, as we said, seceded from the monastery of York and in the sweat of their brow planted this our vine. The brethren who had been sent to Haverholme were dissatisfied with the place of their habitation. So a change was made and they received from the hand of the bishop another site called Louth Park.¹ Now the seed fell into good ground and grew to a great harvest, and in a little while they became a great nation, a people whom God had blessed.

The falling asleep of Richard, the first abbot

It happened in those days that Alberic, bishop of Ostia, came from the court of the pope as legate to England. Men were sent to meet him by the king and kingdom, and among other abbots the abbot of Fountains was sent for and came to show fit reverence to such great holiness. The legate received him with due honour, and finding him a learned and wise man treated him as a friend and as a helper in the office laid upon him. He found him wise in counsel, discreet in judgement, careful in those matters which are of God, and of no mean learning in the holy scriptures. It seemed to the legate that a man of such worth should be known to those at Rome and serve the pope. It was not fit that such a light should be hidden beneath a bushel. When his duty was accomplished the legate took Richard as an unwilling companion to the court, wishing him to be appointed to a higher rank of administration. But the Lord had made

¹ The bishop's own park at Louth.

a better provision for him, and rewarding the labours of his faithful servant took him from his pilgrimage to his home, from toil to the longed-for rest of God. On the way to Rome he was seized with fever, and finishing his life in the way of obedience, ran his course and was perfected in peace.

This is the narrative concerning the origin of our holy mother the church of Fountains, which I heard from the lips of the old man. I set down in order the events which happened down to the falling asleep of our holy and reverend Father Richard, first abbot of Fountains. The following book will set forth what followed as our elder then proceeded.

THE SECOND PART OF THE BOOK

When all had been set down in order which I heard from the lips of the old man with regard to the secession of our fathers from the monastery of York, and the great poverty they suffered at the time of the foundation of Fountains, that is, all the events which happened in the time of Richard the first abbot, the old man thus took up his tale.

The second Abbot Richard

It was announced to the brethren that their reverend father Richard had fallen asleep in the Lord. His sons were grieved at the loss of such a father, but softened the grievousness of their sorrow with a faith still greater. They paid him the debt of humanity, and when he returned home

performed the due rites of piety. Then they discussed the appointment of a successor who, according to the law, should raise up seed to his dead brother. They sent messengers to the abbot of Clairvaux, and by his counsel and permission, after the invocation of the Holy Ghost, unanimously chose the venerable Prior Richard to be their abbot. This was the Richard who was once sacristan of the monastery of York, by whose exhortation and diligence that holy brotherhood of monks left their baked meats and went up to the secret places of holy solitude. 'That man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God,'¹ a most zealous imitator of all pious works. The virtue of his mind shone in his face, the outer man took the image of his soul.

His skill in hearing confessions

Among the other gifts which the holy man had received from God, he had a singular skill in hearing confessions. He was a wonderful observer of consciences and a binder-up of spiritual wounds; and this was the chief means by which he drew to himself the affections of all and excited their devotion. There was nothing so hidden that he could not draw it out by his persuasions, nothing so hardened that it did not melt at his speech, no one so cold that he was not warmed by his exhortation. I call God to witness, I have not found in any man such skill in comforting the sad, in raising up the fallen, and in finding out the hidden causes of the sickness of a conscience. Often, I tell you, I have come to his feet to speak

¹ Job i. 1.

of my conscience and he has anticipated me in the very things I was about to say, has sketched for me, as it were, the form of my mind, and to my amazement has told me the whole state of my soul. He was elected abbot, but accepted the burden unwillingly. He had dedicated himself to spiritual joys and undertook worldly duties with reluctance, disgusted at the sight of blear-eyed Leah after the tender embraces of Rachel. It seemed to him a hard thing to come down to the world and receive alien cares into the sanctuary of his heart. But he acted in accordance with the duty laid upon him, and, though torn in twain, leaned more to the one side than the other. He kept the spirit within as free as possible, and without the Lord watched for him and directed him in all his ways. In his days the monastery grew both in the number of its brothers and the increase of its possessions. Of necessity he performed the part of Martha, but in his heart he aspired to the leisure of Mary. Often he pleaded his stupidity and inexperience, declaring that he was not worthy of his position, both because of his lack of merit and because he thought himself wanting in eloquence. For he had an impediment in his speech whenever he spoke in an assembly, but this slowness of speech was caused, not by his want of skill but by his natural modesty. For four years he worked in his pastoral office, groaning under the burden which he unwillingly bore ; and he began to weary of his duties, considering and revolving in his heart that he would no longer be steward. He went to the holy father Bernard once, twice, and a third time, asking that he might be dismissed in peace, allowed to leave his post,

and be permitted to await within the bosom of the holy church of Clairvaux the day of his calling. The saint told him to give up his purpose, seeing he was not his own master, to keep the position to which he had been called, and to give his pastoral care to the sheep entrusted to him. But he persisted still more earnestly, begging that he might be released from this burden, pleading that he could no longer serve this office. At last the holy father, conquered by the importunity of the suppliant, consented to absolve him if this could be done with the consent of his sons. He wrote, therefore, under seal, to say that at his urgent supplication he was releasing the abbot from his pastoral office, if that met with the approval of the brotherhood; otherwise nothing would be arranged or granted to the prejudice of the brotherhood or contrary to the will of the monks. Abbot Richard returned home with this letter, hoping to easily persuade the minds of his sons to agree to his wish, and came on the vigil of Pentecost to the monastery of Fountains, where we awaited him with hope. All were glad at the coming of such a father, and celebrated the feast of the Holy Ghost with spiritual joy. He concealed and suppressed all that had happened until the fourth day, fearing that if we heard of the matter we would celebrate such a great feast with less rejoicing. On the fourth day he brought the letter into our midst, explained his wish, and asked for our consent. All the brethren grieved at his announcement, our faces changed, and all our exultation was overcome by grief. Then with one voice all cried together, 'We will never consent,' giving thanks to the holy Abbot Bernard for adding this

condition in his letter. Now one of the brethren, Hugh de Matham, craved pardon and rose in the midst to plead the cause of all. In these words he called upon the abbot : ‘ This monastery, which by the gift of God you undertook to rule, has always been known from the time of its foundation to flourish in such peace that no tempest ever disturbed its inner tranquillity, no malice of the ancient enemy ever laid a spell upon it. It knows not the troubles of schism ; it knows not the discords of dissension ; its earth is holy and does not give birth to the thorns of scandal. It cannot loose what is joined together, but what is loosed that it ever unites. For in the spirit of unity its head and its members have so clung together, that what is joined by so fast a knot knows not the sword of division. We marvel at this unholy innovation, which would put asunder the head from the body, and blacken our fame, and quench whatever light of holy religion there is in us. Who will not be scandalized when he hears that the abbot of Fountains has deserted his monks, the father his sons, the shepherd the sheep entrusted to him. One man will cast upon us the guilt of disobedience and perversity, another will put on you the reproach of fickleness and inconstancy. And if the trouble of poverty were heavy upon us this reproach might perhaps be wiped out. But by the favour of God this monastery has increased in your days, both in the number of the brethren and the list of its possessions. The zeal of the order is strong within it, and the rule of discipline. Without its walls peace and security are established by the grace of God. But it is a dangerous matter to be found ungrateful for so many favours. And

if the cares of your office so much oppress you, we will see that you have leisure. We, relying on your prayers, will see to worldly matters. Be still, be silent, make holy your sabbath; only do not desert those whom you cannot desert without scandal. Take warning by greater men. Paul wished to die and be with Christ, but bethought him that he must remain in the flesh for the sake of his brethren. Martin, on the point of entering heaven, was moved by the tears of his disciples; he was already at the door of heaven; Abraham's bosom was open to receive him. Yet he said, "O Lord, if I am still necessary to Thy flock, I do not refuse."¹ And I beg you, holy father, to emulate the devotion of those to whose rank you have risen. Do not leave your offspring, do not desert the sons to whom you have yourself given birth. We are your monks, we know no other abbot; while you live, we will admit no other. Our resolve stands firm, our purpose immutable; by no means will we suffer you to be torn from us.

When he had spoken thus, the abbot considered for a while and then said, 'I thought to have found more favour with you. I hoped that you would look more carefully both to my advantage and to yours. Now, however, I will discuss this matter no further with you. But I tell you honestly that in this very year I shall be released from my post.' And so it came about. For in that very year, when the time came for him to go to the general chapter, he went off. When he came to Clairvaux he fell ill, and his disease increased till it brought him to the end. And when all the due ceremonies had been performed around him by our holy father Bernard,

¹ *Epistola ad Bassulam socrum suam* of Sulpicius Severus.

he put off the outer man and was laid by his fathers. So was fulfilled the word which he spake, 'This very year Richard must be released.'

The falling asleep of Archbishop Thurstan

Now that the story of the falling asleep of Richard the second abbot is complete, it seems not irrelevant to link to it certain matters which occurred about that time while he was still alive.

After the death of our illustrious King Henry, son of William the Bastard, the kingdom was thrown into confusion and the land filled with commotion.

One party took up arms against another, great confusion arose among the people, nor was there any man to restrain it. Stephen of Blois, Count of Mortain, nephew of King Henry by his sister, rose with a great army around him and placed the crown on his own head. He was assisted by his brother Henry, bishop of Winchester and papal legate, a man of great reputation as worldly reputations go. A great part of the people followed Stephen, another part followed Mathilda the empress, daughter of King Henry and wife of the Count of Angers, and a great struggle arose for the kingdom.

About that time died Thurstan of pious memory, the archbishop of York, and, as the clergy disagreed, there arose a contention as to who should be his successor. When they met to hold the election, a considerable number of the clergy chose William the treasurer to be archbishop, but another party lodged an appeal and refused to recognize him. Those who refused were grave and religious

persons, abbots, priors, archdeacons, deacons ; and among them was Richard, abbot of Fountains. Nevertheless, William for the time gained the day, relying on the royal power¹ and favoured by Henry, bishop of Winchester, who laid hands upon him and consecrated him bishop. But he could not obtain the pall from the apostolic see owing to the action of the other party. Now he was a man of noble blood, worthy of holding the see if his election had been canonical.² The blessed Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, wrote against him to Pope Innocent, who was then in supreme authority, and the letter still exists. Thus a mighty dissension arose in the see of York for many days.

Abbot Henry

Meanwhile the venerable abbot of Fountains, the second Richard, had died at Clairvaux, and the holy Abbot Bernard took counsel with himself with regard to the appointment of a new shepherd who should preside and rule over the bereaved flock. After taking counsel with the monks of Clairvaux, he sent to England a venerable man, Henry, abbot of Clairvaux, making him his deputy both for the ordination of an abbot and for performing the annual visitation. Also he wrote to Alexander the prior and to the monastery of Fountains a consolatory letter as follows.

¹ There is no evidence, however, that he was related to Stephen, as is often said.

² He was said to have secured his election by undue influence, but the author of these words could hardly have believed the accusation. It is difficult in any case to understand the tremendous opposition to the ratification of his election by the pope.

*The consolatory letter of Saint Bernard to the
Monastery of Fountains*

To the most beloved brothers in Christ, Alexander the prior and the monks of Fountains, I, Brother Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, send greeting and all my prayers.

Your venerable father has made a blessed end to his course and fallen asleep in the Lord. And though at all times I am anxious for you, as for my offspring, with the affection of a father, now that there is upon us a greater necessity, I feel for you a greater solicitude. Wherefore I would have sent to you long ago, but I was waiting till it could be done more opportunely and with more convenience ; for the venerable Henry could not come to you sooner as he was engaged in business, and from the first he was the man whom I had specially marked out for you, both because he is himself a very able man and because he seemed specially suited for this matter. Receive him then, beloved brethren, with all the love and honour of which he is worthy, and hear him in all things as ye would hear me ; nay, so much the more, because he excels me in merit and wisdom. I have made him my deputy both for holding the election and in all matters whatsoever which are to be regulated or reformed in your monastery or in those which have proceeded from it. And I have sent with him brother Walter, who is our beloved son.

And now I call upon you as most dear sons to be all of one mind in the election. Let there be no schism among you, but with one heart and one voice glorify God, who is not the God of strife but

of peace, and his place was made in peace, and He saith, 'He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.'¹ Far be it from those who live in the school of Christ with the Holy Ghost as master, that the enemy should rejoice over them and glory in their dissension. For so their own souls would be in danger, the great labour of their penitence would have been in vain, they would make foul the sweet smell of a righteous order, the name of Christ would be blasphemed by those who ought specially to glorify it. Nay, rather, I beg you to choose in accordance with our trust in you, 'as becometh saints,'² as befits the servants of Christ, that is, unanimously, one who is a fit shepherd for your souls, having the help of the venerable abbots of Rievaulx and Vauclair, whose counsel I wish you to follow in all things as if it were my own.

The letter of Saint Bernard to the Abbot Henry

To the best beloved brother and fellow abbot, Henry, I, brother Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, send greeting and prayers.

I command you, brother Henry, that, if the choice of our brothers of Fountains, aided by the counsel of the venerable abbot of Rievaulx, should fall upon you, you do not refuse but be obedient in love. I do this unwillingly, knowing how much advice I shall lose by your absence. But I shrink from opposing those who are of one mind, believing that the word comes from God when the wishes of all religious men agree in it, as I have read in the Gospel, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,'³

¹ Matt. xii. 30. ² Rom. xvi. 2. ³ Matt. xviii. 20.

saith the Lord. Go then, beloved, and receive their vows,¹ and in other things care for them as the shepherd of their souls. Fear not for the monastery which you undertook to rule. I, God willing, will provide for it a capable ruler, for it is not so far off from me. Do not hesitate to obey through fear of the bishop ;² leave that to me.

Abbot Henry

So the men who were sent by the holy Abbot Bernard came to Fountains, and were received with due honour. The letters of the abbot of Clairvaux were read in the midst, the brethren reverently obeyed, and after the invocation of the Holy Ghost chose by common consent the aforementioned Henry³ to be their abbot. He was that Henry who was afterwards elected archbishop of the province of York, and whose rule was as capable as it was honourable. He had a great mind and was altogether invincible in the cause of righteousness, choosing rather to be in peril for the sake of righteousness than that righteousness should be imperilled while he was in power. He therefore carried out splendidly the duties of the government he had undertaken, rooting up and destroying whatever he found in the field of the Lord which had been planted by strangers. He

¹ There would be many novices waiting to take the monastic vow.

² Of Laon, in whose diocese Vauclair was situated.

³ Henry Murdac was member of a wealthy family of Yorkshire. He held some preferment in York under Thurstan before going to Clairvaux. He was chosen by St. Bernard to be first abbot of Vauclair.

cut down the groves, destroyed the high places, broke down the walls, and Jerusalem was searched with candles.¹ At the time of his coming there were in the tabernacle of Jacob images of foolishness which had been brought secretly from the house of Laban, and he found in the possession of some of the brethren unlawful private property, according to the custom which they inherited from their first mother. But the holy man turned the house upside down, searched out hidden things, and joined together into one whole all that the hand of avarice, contrary to the rule of the order, had divided into separate portions.

He was the first to bring our Fountains to the perfect purity of the order, and, scouring off the rust of the former life, to establish there the rule of discipline of a healthy monastery according to the rites of Clairvaux. From that day and henceforth the daughter imitated the perfection of the mother in regular exercises and holy mode of life. And the monastery grew in his days within and without; and three granges were added to it, Cowton, Kilnsey, and Marton.²

The foundation of the Monastery of Woburn

And the Lord moreover increased their people and extended the boundaries of their possessions. There was a certain holy man, Hugo de Bolebec, powerful and of great wealth. And God put it into his heart that for the redemption of his sins he ought to found a monastery of the Cistercian

¹ Zeph. i. 12.

² East Cowton is near Northallerton, Kilnsey near Grassington, and Marton-le-Moor near Ripon.

order. He came to Fountains, and in accordance with the advice of Abbot Henry consecrated to divine use a certain village called Woburn, in the diocese of Lincoln, together with the adjacent lands. The holy abbot took the gift from the hand of the rich man, and when the usual buildings had been erected chose according to rule brothers to send to the place. In the one thousand one hundred and forty-fifth year after the Incarnation of our Lord, and the thirteenth year of the foundation of our mother, a brotherhood of monks under Abbot Alan was sent forth from the monastery of Fountains to the place which is now called Woburn.

Lysa

It happened after some time that the bishop of Bergen came to England from Norway. He visited Fountains and was struck by the new form of religion. With much urgency he entreated the venerable Abbot Henry to send him, according to rule, a brotherhood of monks. The abbot consented, and after taking counsel with his brethren sent to Norway with the bishop a brotherhood of monks under Abbot Ranulph. This took place in the one thousand one hundred and forty-sixth year after the Incarnation of our Lord, and it was the fourteenth year after the foundation of the monastery of Fountains, on the tenth of July, when the brotherhood of monks under Abbot Ranulph was sent to the monastery called Lysa.¹

¹ Near Bergen. It was put in 1213 under the jurisdiction of the abbey of Alvastra (founded 1143), in the diocese of Linköping, Sweden, owing to the inability of the abbot of Fountains to make the annual visitation. Lys is Norwegian for light.

This Ranulph was one of our first fathers, devout and full of love. He ruled the monastery for many years and taught a barbarous people to grow gentle under the yoke of Christ. Released at last by the permission of the abbot of Fountains, he returned to his own people, and, having finished his course in joy, fell asleep in peace, a man of great age and full of days. Many things are told of him that are worthy of memory, that he was a man of wondrous holiness, of boundless consolation, that he had the gift of revelation and spirit of prophecy. It is said also that the man had an angel of God sent to him, who visited him at certain hours and was wont to wake him if he indulged too long at night in sleep.

The foundation of the Monastery of Kirkstall

In the one thousand one hundred and forty-seventh year after the Incarnation of our Lord, a certain nobleman, Henry de Lacey, in the diocese of York, undertook to build a monastery of the Cistercian order. He chose a place and built a monastery, and a brotherhood of monks was sent to it under Abbot Alexander.¹ This Alexander was one of our first fathers and brother on the mother's side to Richard, the second abbot of Fountains, who, as we have seen, died in peace at Clairvaux. Among these brethren I, Serlo, was sent, already infirm, as you see, and worn out with

¹ Walbran supplies some facts which Serlo thought fit to omit, namely, how the monks evicted the inhabitants of the place from their own church, and finally pulled it down. The poor people appealed in vain both to the Archbishop and the Pope. *Memorials of Fountains*, p. 91

age. The place of our habitation was first called Barnoldswick,¹ but we changed its name and called it Mount St. Mary. We remained there for some years, suffering many hardships through cold and hunger, both owing to the inclemency of the weather and the continued rain, and because in the disturbed state of the kingdom our goods were constantly carried off by prowlers. Consequently we were discontented with the place of our habitation and the abbey was reduced to a grange. In accordance with the advice of our patron,² we moved to another place which is now called Kirkstall. In the fifteenth year of the foundation of the monastery of Fountains, on the nineteenth of May, we were sent forth under Abbot Alexander, twelve monks and ten lay-brothers.

The foundation of Vaudey

In the one thousand one hundred and forty-seventh year after the Incarnation of our Lord, Betham was founded in the diocese of Lincoln. Its name was afterwards changed to a better, and it is now called Vaudey.³ It is a famous monastery and full of grace. The founder was William, Earl of Albemarle, who afterwards founded Meaux,

¹ Near Skipton, about seven miles from Sawley Abbey.

² Here again, according to Walbran, Serlo conceals the real facts. The abbot on a journey found some monks at Kirkstall, and, liking the appearance of the place, hurried off to his patron to see if he could help him to get possession of it. In this he was successful, and the monks on the spot were taken into the abbot's house; those who declined to join were paid to move on.

³ That is, *valles Dei*, the valley of God. The few remains are in Grimsthorpe Park, near Bourne.

a man of great mind, and very famous in his generation. In the fifteenth year after the foundation of the monastery of Fountains a brotherhood of monks was sent forth under Abbot Warin to the monastery which is now called Vaudey, on the twenty-third of May, in the same year as our foundation.¹

The foundation of the Monastery of Meaux

In the one thousand one hundred and fiftieth year after the Incarnation of our Lord there was founded in the diocese of York an abbey called Meaux.² Its founder was the aforesaid William, Earl of Albemarle. In the nineteenth year of the foundation of the monastery of Fountains, in the twenty-eighth of December, a brotherhood of monks was sent to Meaux under Abbot Adam.³ This was the youngest daughter which our mother bore ; she ceased after this to bear. So these are the generations of our people ; this is the offspring of our mother. She brought forth seven daughters ; from them she received five grandchildren, seeing her daughters' sons even to the fourth generation.

The burning of the Monastery of Fountains

At that time the church of York laboured under a grievous dissension, and there was no one to bring it to an end. A great number of the clergy followed Archbishop William, another party strove

¹ That is, Kirkstall.

² Near Beverley.

³ There is an interesting account of Adam in Walbran's *Memorials of Fountains*, p. 96 (1).

against him. He himself presided over the see, relying on the royal power to subdue those who opposed him. Meanwhile Pope Innocent put off mortality and was succeeded by Pope Celestine. When in a little while he too was removed from our midst, Eugene, once a monk of the monastery of Clairvaux, became chief pontiff. While Eugene then was at the head of affairs, an attack was made on Archbishop William by those who accused him, abbots, priors, and monks, archdeacons and clergy, among them being Henry, abbot of Fountains. Presuming upon the favour of the chief pontiff, they took him to the papal court, and there, when the pleadings of both sides had been heard, Pope Eugene gave his decision and William was removed from the see of York. Those who took his part were indignant at his degradation. They found their defeat intolerable, and formed schemes of unholy daring. The knights who were of his kindred gathered together to one place in a numerous company. They swore an oath and planned to slay with the sword Henry the venerable abbot of Fountains, as being the cause of his degradation. Their criminal recklessness grew to such a height that they were not afraid in their hatred of him to destroy the monastery of Fountains over which he ruled. They came to Fountains in armed array, broke down the doors, insolently entered the sanctuary, rushed through the buildings, seized spoil, and as they did not find the abbot whom they sought they set fire to that sacred building which had been erected with great labour, and reduced it to ashes. They had no respect for the order; they had no respect for the altar. The holy brotherhood stood by and saw with sorrow

at their heart the building raised by the sweat of their brows wrapped in flames, soon to be ashes. The church alone, with the buildings close to it, was saved, reserved as they believed for prayer, and even the church was half consumed, like a brand plucked from the burning. The holy abbot, prostrate before the foot of the altar, fell to prayer. He was seen by no one, and hurt by no one, for the hand of the Lord protected him. The knights departed, their black deed accomplished, and carried their spoils with them, little indeed of money, but much damnation. These guilty men were not allowed to rejoice long in their wickedness; the hand of the Lord was heavy upon them. The stroke of the enemy fell upon them with cruel chastisement, and they died in their sins; some wasted with disease, some drowned, some going mad, some overwhelmed by diverse disasters, almost all without absolution. But the abbot and the brethren were comforted in the Lord, and, recovering their strength as if after shipwreck, set out anew on their voyage. They repaired the fallen places, rebuilt the ruins, and, as it is written, the walls fell down, but with hewn stones it was built again.¹ They were helped by the faithful of the neighbourhood; a new building rose up, far more gorgeous than its predecessor.

Archbishop Henry

William, once the treasurer, had been removed, as we said, from the see of York, and Henry, the venerable abbot of Fountains, was elected by the

¹ Isa. ix, 10.

vote of the wiser party¹ to be archbishop. He went up to Clairvaux to see the holy Abbot Bernard, on whose advice he was altogether dependent. From there he started for the papal court, found Pope Eugene at Treves, and was welcomed by him with honour. The pope consented to his election and consecrated him as archbishop. He received the pall and, having been invested with the favour and grace of the Roman see, returned to his own place. In the early days of his episcopate he suffered many hardships and difficulties, the anger of the king, the dissensions among good men, the treachery of his adversaries. The citizens of York hated him, and conspiring together refused to let him enter the city. 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.'² He therefore turned aside to Ripon, giving way to their rage until the anger of the king should die down. So he conquered malice with wisdom, fury with gentleness, and broke down with patience the king's indignation.

Abbot Maurice

Meanwhile he went to Fountains and appointed as abbot a certain monk of Rievaulx named Maurice.³ This Maurice, after a sojourn at Fountains of not quite three months, resigned his office into the hands of the archbishop and returned to the place whence he had been taken.

¹ The rival candidate was Hilary, afterwards bishop of Chichester.

² John i. 11.

³ As neither Maurice nor his successor are entered in the chronicle of the abbots (Appendix II) it has been assumed that they merely acted as deputies of Henry Murdac during his residence at Ripon. See also Walbran's *Memorials*, p. 154.

Abbot Thorold

The successor of Maurice was Abbot Thorold, also chosen from the monastery of Rievaulx, no mean scholar in the holy scriptures and very learned in all liberal studies.¹ For two years he was head of the monastery of Fountains and was very active in the exercise of his authority, even taking upon himself certain actions contrary to the advice and authority of the venerable archbishop. A quarrel therefore arose between them, and by command of our holy father Bernard, Thorold resigned his office and returned to Rievaulx.

Abbot Richard the third

So abbot Thorold retired from his post and for a while the monastery of Fountains was vacant, bereft of a shepherd. There was a meeting, therefore, of those whose business it was to discuss the election, and by common consent they sent messengers to the holy father Bernard, casting upon him the whole responsibility of the appointment, and saying that whomsoever by God's grace he should appoint, that man should be their father and the shepherd of their souls. Now at that time there was in the monastery of Clairvaux a certain precentor named Richard, once abbot of Vauclair, an Englishman, born in the city of York. He was a man of excellent life and perfect piety, and through the virtue of his life was a friend of our holy father Bernard and of Henry, archbishop of York. Thus Richard

¹ That is, the studies befitting a freeman or gentleman as opposed to servile occupations. The phrase is familiar to freemasons.

was ordained abbot by Saint Bernard, and on his arrival at Fountains was received by the brethren with due honour. Assuming the pastoral office, he fulfilled in his actions a pastor's duties, carefully watching over the flock committed to him, having always before his eyes the future judgement of sheep and shepherd. His chief care was for the salvation of souls, the increase of a righteous flock, the observance of the holy rule, the discipline of the order. After he had taken up his office he laboured strenuously, zealous for the order and mortifying his flesh with great severity, using example rather than precept to teach the life of salvation. He showed the way by his life and became a pattern to his flock, ever most watchful lest his words should be out of harmony with his deeds or his teaching with his life. He was helped by the holy Bishop Henry, for the sake of the peace of the church and the purity of the order ; and the monastery increased in those days, externally in possessions, internally both in piety and religion.

The restoration of Archbishop William

At that time it happened that Pope Eugene was called by God and set free from the flesh. And also the blessed Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, about that time departed to the Lord. Archbishop Henry, too, putting off the outer man, followed those whom he loved. They loved one another 'in their lives, and in their death they were not divided'.¹ They were leaders of the Lord's flock, pillars of the Church, lights of the world.

By the death of Henry, bishop of York, the

¹ 2 Sam. i. 23.

venerable Archbishop William, of whom we spoke above, succeeded to his place, and was restored to his original see from which he had been removed. But at his restoration he promised by command of Pope Anastatius, the successor of Eugene, to give satisfaction in all things to the monastery of Fountains for the injuries and losses which by him or for his sake had been inflicted on the brethren, and that he would cherish that place and its inhabitants with pastoral care and fatherly love. He would have fulfilled his vow had not an untimely death removed him from our midst. He came humbly to Fountains and promised satisfaction, receiving the brethren with the kiss of peace and confirming to them in their entirety all the possessions which had been acquired for the monastery by their predecessors. Thence he went to York, and as soon as he entered on his office, while he was assisting at the holy altar, in the very act, it is said, of offering, he drank poison in the cup and died.¹

*The disturbance in the monastery of Fountains
in the time of Abbot Richard*

The holy church of Fountains flourished at that time within and without, enriched both in spiritual and temporal possessions, and there was no one to disturb their peace. Seeing this, the enemy of peace, our ancient foe, envied such peace and such prosperity. He sought permission and entered to tempt them. Bringing forth the vessels of his wrath, he took away their peace and threw their camp into confusion, casting contention among

¹ He was canonized in 1227.

the citizens, discord among the brethren, sowing tares among the wheat, dissension among the holy brotherhood. And lo, suddenly the thorns of scandal began to spring up, the shoots of bitterness to come forth, the poison of discord to be diffused, the darts of calumny to fly hither and thither. They attacked each other, fell on each other, Ephraim on Manasseh, and Manasseh on Ephraim, and both together upon Judah. All their indignation was kindled against the abbot, a mutiny broke out, and the sons rose against their father, sheep against their shepherd, to the church a scandal, to their adversaries an object of derision. The holy abbot saw the difficulty of the situation, the stratagem of the devil, and reflecting that he could not by his own strength repress the insolence of a multitude, chose to retire for a time till the storm should subside and its waves be still. So he retired from the office laid upon him, praying God for his restless flock; and the Lord hearkened to him. Suddenly they returned to their right minds, were amazed at their reckless presumption, repented, changed their plan, and restored Abbot Richard to his former place by their own authority. But such great presumption did not escape its due punishment, their reckless daring was chastised with severer discipline. Those who were the authors of the schism were expelled; then the earth was quiet, authority was restored to the order, reverence to the father, peace to the monastery, discipline to the sinners. From that day and henceforth no such thing was ventured on at Fountains, nothing was rashly attempted by the holy brotherhood against the rule of the order.

Abbot Richard lived many years after this, teaching his people in the fear of God, and the Lord blessed his last days more than the first. When all things were at peace without and within according to his prayer, he saw his sons bearing fruit in grace and walking in love. And he, in a good old age, surrounded by a company of holy men, full of days and rich in virtues, departed to the Lord.

Abbot Robert

So Abbot Richard died, as we have said, and his successor was the venerable Robert, abbot of Pipewell,¹ translated from the bosom of the daughter to govern the mother. When he had taken up his office he discharged its duties with vigour. He was a man of proved excellence in all kinds of virtue, worthy in every way of being elected to such a height of power. I do not remember to have seen a man who was better fitted for the pastoral office or who more satisfactorily cared for those under his charge, so entirely did his character correspond with the duties laid upon him. He was very active in his administration, a faithful and a prudent ruler, far-seeing in his plans, discreet in his decisions, most diligent in all that touched the brethren, full of pity to the poor, liberal to all. All his care was to cherish the poor, entertain travellers, show fit honour to guests, give help to the weak, and provide with more than ordinary care, in accordance with the rule of the order, for the necessities of the brethren. In

¹ See p. 187.

liberality and dignity he excelled all his predecessors. He ruled those who were put under him with much courtesy, mindful of the saying, 'He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house.'¹ He instituted customs of which he approved, and altered and corrected those which were unsatisfactory, and changed for the better the whole condition of the monastery in the sight of both God and man. The holy man did honour to his office, recommenced work on the church, erected splendid buildings.² His great soul did not consider the diminishing of their substance or fear the drain of an increased expenditure. He cast his care upon the Lord, and the hand of the Lord was with him to his comfort. In all his works He blessed him, multiplying the brethren and increasing their possessions, and peace and truth were established in his days. For nine years he ruled the monastery of Fountains, showing himself kindly to all, beloved by all and himself loving the whole world. In the ninth year, as he was returning from the general chapter, he fell ill on the journey. At Woburn he grew worse and met his appointed end. His body was brought to Fountains with due honour and laid in the sepulchres of his fathers.

Abbot William.

For a time the church of Fountains was vacant, bereft of a shepherd; but God provided for it. There was a meeting of those whom it concerned, and they chose William, abbot of Newminster, an excellent and holy man, who had prudently

¹ Prov. xv. 27.

² Probably the refectory and south end of the cellarium.

governed with pastoral vigilance the monastery under him. This William was at first a canon militant,¹ under the rule of the holy Father Augustine, among the canons regular of Guisborough, and himself professed to live according to their rule. Thence, however, through the love of greater perfection, he went over to Newminster and received from the hand of the holy Abbot Robert the habit of the Cistercian order. So he professed a new service and laboured to be renewed with fresh holiness. He declared war on vices, battle with pleasures, and mortifying his members he compelled the flesh to serve the spirit, perhaps in this one thing going too far in that he made a virtuous act less praiseworthy through his excess. By immoderate fastings and vigils he attenuated his body and made himself less strong and less able. For many years he ruled Newminster, and the house prospered in his hands, in the number of the brethren and the increase of their possessions. From there he was translated and undertook at a great age the care of the church of Fountains. But no part of the observance of the order or the administration of worldly matters was left undone because of his great age. He was a man of counsel and had faithful advisers, active officials, and obedient sons, who in filial affection supported upon their shoulders the old age of their father. He governed those put under him with much gentleness, seeking the good of his people. And the monastery was increased under his rule in farms and pastures and abundant possessions. For ten years he ruled the church of Fountains,

¹ The Knights Hospitallers and the Canons Regular were both under the rule of St. Augustine.

and having finished his course he fell asleep in peace in a holy old age, leaving to posterity a grateful memory in grace and blessing.

The conclusion of the words of the aged Serlo.

The elder, having followed thus far the course of his narrative, made an end of speaking. And looking at me, the brother said, 'You must carefully consider what is to be said of the holy Abbot Ralph. You knew the man; how conspicuous were his eminent virtues in things human and divine; how wisely and vigorously he exercised the power entrusted to him. You must take up the tale in your turn as a duty to the man who taught you the first principles of this life, and first instilled the taste for holy religion.'

And I replied, 'I will not own myself a debtor if I have the skill to speak. I owe myself altogether to him and always shall, for it is from his holy hand that I received the pattern of this holy institution, under his authority that I lived as a friend, and by him was given me, through God's grace, the opportunity of salvation and the pattern of healthful discipline. No subject would be to me more welcome, no story more pleasant, than one which keeps alive the memory of our holy father and describes his character. Willingly, therefore, I approach this task, and gladly will I consider what it comes into my mind to say about this holy man.'

Abbot Ralph.

So Abbot William died, and his successor was Abbot Ralph of holy memory, a man worthy of all praise, a mirror of religion, a flower of the order, a pattern of discipline. His memory is a compound of sweet odours, the work of that unguent-maker who in a fragile vessel of flesh heaped together so many unguents of virtue. He was once a soldier in the world, and did not loose the girdle of his soldier-life, but changed it for a better, joining himself to the camp of the Hebrews, afterwards to be a prince among the people of God. He was born of parentage illustrious after the glory of the flesh, but he transcended by the excellence of his life and the greatness of his virtues the nobility of his ancestry. He received the habit of the religious life at Fountains from the hand of the holy Abbot Robert, being then it was thought about thirty years of age, vigorous in bodily strength but far more excellent in the virtue of his mind. He thus took the oath of a new service, and how he laboured for the perfection of purity those know who had the honour of being his comrades at the time of his probation. No one was more prompt, more humble, more zealous in the observance of the way of salvation. He performed with the greatest eagerness all the rules of the order, was fervent in the work of God, frequent in prayer, patient of abuse, most obedient to commands, always cheerful and eager for works of charity. From the first days of his conversion he possessed the spirit of goodness and a certain flavour of inward sweetness in the wonderful pleasantness

of which he was steeped, and easily freed himself from all worldly delights. He stayed within in the house of conscience, devoting as much time as he could to meditation, and avoiding sensual snares he ever returned to these tried delights, coveting earnestly 'the best gifts'¹ and always urging himself on to more abundant perfection. While he was under arms he had ceased to study, but now made up for lost time by the assiduity of his reading; yet it was in the book of experience that he read what others worked at in libraries.

There were at that time in the monastery of Fountains grave and religious men, both monks and lay-monks, of high repute, distinguished for piety, devoted to meditation. Among them a certain lay-monk named Sunnulph was conspicuous for singular grace and purity. He was simple and illiterate, but God had taught him: For book he had his conscience, for teacher the Holy Spirit; and reading in the book of experience he grew day by day in the knowledge of holy things, having even the spirit of revelation. The holy Abbot Ralph was very intimate with this servant of God, even while he was yet a soldier, and he often went to Fountains to visit him and commend himself to his prayers. He used to tell us many things worthy of repetition concerning the piety and moderation of the man, the gravity of his silence, his modest carriage, the discipline of his habits; how ready he was to exhort, how helpful in consolation, how sweet in intercourse, and how carefully he always watched lest any idle word should fall from his lips. 'I went once,' the abbot said, 'to this man of God while I was still in secular garb,

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 31.

to consult him about my doubts as to my condition, with which I was grievously discontented. For I was weary of my life, and utterly detesting my former pursuits I was vacillating, not having yet resolved what pattern of life I should adopt; there was a great conflict in my mind. At times I contemplated casting off the weight of the world and assuming the habit of holy religion, but I was bound by the chain of custom and feared to enter upon the way of salvation. I poured out all the trouble of my heart before the man of God, earnestly entreating him to pray for me in my pain. "Willingly," he said, "will I pray for you; pray likewise yourself, and have a care that your actions stand not in the way of our prayers." So I left him, having asked his blessing. And he prayed for me and the Lord hearkened unto him. I seemed to feel the virtue of his prayers; so were the chains of my heart loosed and the yoke melted from the surface of the oil.¹ In those days I was living in a village where there was a chapel, built in honour of the Blessed Virgin, near the house in which I was sleeping. One night I rose up and seemed to enter the chapel to pray. Standing before the cross, I poured out my soul before my God and prayed with tears that the Lord would direct my goings according to his good pleasure, to his praise and glory, and to my eternal salvation. And lo, while I prayed there was a voice from the cross which uttered these words: "Why comest thou not; why delayest thou so long?" At this

¹ Walbran quotes Song of Sol. i. 3, and the 14th and 15th sermons of St. Bernard on that book. The allusion is probably to the 14th sermon, where St. Bernard quotes a similar experience to that of Ralph.

voice I fell prone on the earth, and, my heart overcome with emotion and my voice broken with tears, answered, "Lo, O Lord ; lo, I come."

' So I swear an oath and made firm my purpose to tarry no longer in the world. But I had not yet determined to what order I ought to submit myself. When morning came, I went up to the man of God, telling him what I had heard in the night, and what was my purpose ; that I was prepared to acquiesce in his advice and listen to his counsel. We sat alone in a place apart, when lo, while we were talking, he fell suddenly silent, and, bursting into abundant tears, gazed on me with a serene countenance. " God has now revealed to me," he said, " what He has himself ordained concerning you. You shall assume the habit of religion in the monastery of Fountains and, when your course is run, you shall there end your days. When I heard this, I went without delay, and, according to the advice of the old man, changed my habit and bowed my neck to the sweet yoke of Christ.'

This is what the holy abbot told me about the old man Sinnulph ; and the story must be true, for the course of events afterwards proved it. But now let us return to the thread of our story.

The grace he experienced at communion.

There was one solemn day when all the brethren were wont to communicate. Among the rest the novice himself approached to communicate, and when he received from the hand of the priest the gift of the saving host, he was bathed in such wonderful sweetness and pleasantness that his

senses almost left him. He forgot himself and could scarcely stand upright. I asked him what this sweetness was like, what kind of taste it gave ; if it were at all like honey or any bodily food. ' I have never in my life,' he answered, ' known anything which I could compare to this sweetness. It did not resemble honey or any material food, since one can taste these only in the palate ; but this sweetness not only suffused the depths of my heart, but even filled the inmost places of my soul with a wonderful and indescribable pleasure.

The fear of God.

Another thing I heard from his lips, and I cannot suppress it, though there may be some perchance who will give no credence to this our tale. Nor is it wonderful if they doubt the spiritual visions of the man on whose worldly capacity they always looked with disfavour. The man of God was once standing at prayer, and lo, as he prayed he was suffused with an inward light. Wonderful to tell, he saw the fear of the Lord and was not himself afraid. But what was that fear, and what was it like ? Nothing, he said, could be imagined or heard of more terrible or more horrible than this fear. Yet I have seen the fear without fear, and have cast off the weight of fear ; that weight which hangs over the wicked, of whom it is written, ' When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and a sudden despair of salvation.'¹

¹ Wisd. of Sol. v. 2.

The revelation of the Trinity

I am about to speak of an event of which I often heard from his own lips. I relate it not without fear, yet I think it should by no means be suppressed. On a certain Sunday when the holy brotherhood were standing at lauds, they were singing the psalm, 'O give thanks unto the Lord.' When the man of God earnestly concentrated his thoughts upon the meaning of that psalm, the hand of the Lord took hold upon him, and he saw a great vision, a glorious vision, the Trinity itself appearing in three persons. I asked him under what shape or form this revelation was made. 'No shape,' he said, 'no figure appeared, and yet I saw in a blessed vision the three Persons in Unity. I saw and I knew the Father unbegotten, the Son only-begotten, and the Holy Ghost that proceeded from both. And the vision lasted until two verses of the aforesaid psalm were completed. From that hour and henceforth, nothing so sad, nothing so contrary has happened to me, that it cannot be softened by the memory of that happy vision. This memory is to me a solace in grief and a help in adversity, my joy, and the exultation of my heart, the strength of my faith, the prop of my hope. In short, with such confident hope was I imbued by that revelation that I have never since been able to doubt of my salvation, seeing that the revelation of so blessed a vision was made to me.' This story of himself our saintly master often told us, not without tears.

In the thirteenth year of his conversion he was made abbot of Kirkstall. There he stayed eight

years and had many troubles; he fought with adversity without and fears within, with the plots of his servants, the poverty of his household, the dissipation of his property. Yet he advanced always on the royal road and bore misfortunes with the same countenance and the same firmness, and with the shield of faith before him escaped the treacherous attacks of his step-mother fortune. In the third year after he had been made abbot I said farewell to the world and received from his sacred hand this habit of our order. I lived for seven years under his rule, and happy had I been if I still to this day continued to have him for my master. It was a great help towards improvement to have known intimately the character of the man and the manner of his life. His speech was full of charm spiced with wit, and all his carriage and habits afforded a pattern of the perfection of discipline. None was more frugal in prosperity, more liberal in poverty, more impartial in judgment, more loyal in friendship.

He spent nine years at Kirkstall, and then undertook the charge of the church of Fountains. When he had taken upon him a charge of such importance, he began to act in a manner worthy of his office, to work with more energy for the purity of the order, to punish offences more severely, though always with wise discretion. He visited the daughter monasteries most thoroughly, leaving nothing undiscussed which could by his wisdom be examined. He went round to each in turn, and Jerusalem was searched with candles;¹ he burnt down the groves, destroyed the high places, buried the idols under the terebinth,² and

¹ Zeph. i. 12.

² Gen. xx : v. 4.

punished severely those who sacrificed in gardens.¹ What manner of man he was in the entertainment of guests and the refreshment of the poor, the following story will show. There was a grievous famine in those days,² and the poor gathered in great numbers to the gate of Fountains. There was no place which could take them, but with branches broken from the neighbouring wood the brethren made them little huts like shepherds' shelters, where the poor could stay and await refreshment from the house of God. He appointed diligent men fit to deal with this business, and they distributed alms to the poor. Moreover he appointed priests to visit daily the sick and ill, receive their confessions, give them the last sacrament, and provide them at their death with Christian burial.

It happened about this time that as he was returning from the general chapter he came to Clairvaux and lay there for many days desperately ill. There was with him at the time a certain monk named Ralph of Newcastle,³ who cared for him constantly, sad and anxious for his father, who, he feared, was on the point of death. But the holy abbot comforted him and said, 'I have not to die at Clairvaux; it is at Fountains I expect the day of my departure. For brother Sinnulph foretold to me that I should live at Fountains and there should end my life.' And so it happened. He recovered from his sickness, returned to Fountains, and there rejoiced for several years in the blessing of health. About that time a nobleman, Geoffrey Haget, own brother of Abbot Ralph,

¹ Isa. lxv. 3.

² 1194.

³ Afterwards abbot of Kirkstall.

fell ill. The abbot was called to the sick man, who relied altogether on his advice, and in making disposition of his property he conveyed to the church of Fountains in alms a certain village called Thorpe¹ with its appurtenances, giving them also his body for burial. Afterwards the inhabitants of the village were removed and it was turned into a grange, rich in crops and useful for the needs of the monastery. After this the holy abbot fell ill, and when his sickness grew heavy upon him he knew that the day of his release was at hand. All due ceremonies, therefore, were performed around him, and the days of his pilgrimage over he departed rich in merits to the Lord. The monastery was increased in his time, outwardly in possessions and estates, inwardly in virtues and the number of monks. And the possessions which were added in his time to the church of Fountains consisted of the grange of Thorpe, the gift of Geoffrey Haget.

In the thirteenth year of his stewardship, Abbot Ralph, as brother Sinnulph had foretold, fell asleep in peace at Fountains.

Abbot John.

So Abbot Ralph, surnamed Haget, was removed from our midst, and his successor was the venerable Abbot John, an honourable man and worthy of all praise, a native of York, though he derived nothing but his name and birth from his city and the morals of its citizens. He surpassed his family in the nobility of his mind, was disgusted by the inveterate follies of the people, and aspiring to

¹ Thorpe Underwoods is two miles south-east of Little Ouseburn and about twelve miles from Ripon.

honesty he made up for the mediocrity of his fellow citizens by the probity of his character. While a young man of good disposition he was received at Fountains as a novice, and later was made cellarer. Then he was created abbot of Louth Park, and finally took upon him the charge of the church of Fountains, his mother. He did not lack the grace of God, which stood ever by his side like an honoured mother. It directed all his works, and through it he was, as we read of Joseph, a man prospering in all his doings, provident in action, prudent in reply, in counsels wise, in judgement discreet. He walked in the footsteps of his predecessor, Abbot Ralph, following most diligently his example in the observance of the order and the authority of his position, in making visitations, in administering business, in discussing causes and correcting faults, imitating in all things the pattern which he had received from him, guiding and loving the gentle and humble, severely rebuking and punishing the troublesome and dissolute, yet ever exalting mercy above judgement. He was endowed by nature with a pleasant manner, and made himself accessible and courteous to all. In liberality and munificence he excelled all who had ruled the church of Fountains before him. He kept a liberal table, was affable in company, agreeable to guests, bountiful to the needy, amiable among the brethren, honoured among the great. No one was more liberal in conferring benefits, no one more excellent, no one who could confer a benefit more fitly or suitably. He did not delay the gift he was resolved to make, but showed the benevolence of his mind by the swiftness of his giving, while the cheerfulness of his countenance

lent charm to the gift. Yet there were not lacking men who always looked askance upon his actions and put an evil interpretation upon his lavish outlay. They said that he spent more than was fitting, to catch the favour of the people and the friendship of those in power; that he was aiming at the favour and friendship of the king, and by his private obsequiousness was aiming at the mitre under a cloak of piety. But he was not at all moved by these slanders, and proceeded according to the natural liberality of his mind. He was kind to the poor, generous to suppliants, courteous to all. And the Lord blessed the man in his works, giving him peace within and without, charity and concord among the brethren, abundance of all goods in worldly things, and, as it is written in Job,¹ 'Their bull gendereth and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf. They send forth their little ones like a flock.' 'Every one bears twins, and none is barren among them.'²

But lest the man of faith should lack the test of temptation, it happened in those days that King John, who then ruled the kingdom and was led astray by wicked counsels, hated the sons of the order and oppressed with an intolerable exaction all the monasteries of our order which were in his power. He did not spare the church of Fountains, though he had received from her many and great gifts, but extorted from her twelve hundred marks of silver to be paid immediately. Moreover he so cruelly oppressed the other houses of our order which were in his power that their sheep and oxen were torn from them and they were even obliged to sell the vessels consecrated to the divine service

¹ Job xxi. 10.

² Song of Sol. iv. 2.

and the vestments of the priests. A wretched sight to see! For the monks who once in the seclusion of the cloister had given themselves up to reading and prayer and spiritual pursuits, were now scattered by stern necessity through the villages and towns, some among soldiers, some among monks, some in the camp, some in villages among lay-folk, wherever they could get their daily bread. The kindler and inciter of this wrong was Richard de Marisco,¹ of whom much must be told in his place and whose memory will never die so long as the Cistercian order lasts in the world. Abbot John, seeing the wickedness of the time, the cruelty of the king, the oppression of his order, considered what he should do and how for a while he could help the oppressed. He took counsel with his people and, making a virtue of necessity, poured out money that he might buy peace, making a pretence of the generosity which he was unable to avoid. By this means he gained the favour of the king, opened his barns and storehouses, and faithfully and prudently distributed the gifts of God to the people of God. But the hand of the Lord was with him and comforted him. For as it is written of Zarephath² that water did not fail in the pot or oil in the cruse, so, by the blessing of God and the dispensation of the abbot, corn did not fail in the barns or abundance in the cellars. Their bread was not diminished, their drink was sure; neither their food failed nor their raiment, nor the things which they sought in accordance with their rule for the refreshment of the poor, the entertainment of guests, the sustenance of the whole house of Fountains.

¹ Bishop of Durham, 1217-1226.

² 1 Kings xvii. 16.

And at that time the church flourished like a vine planted by the hand of God, giving out the fragrance of sweetness and holiness. Many flocked to it from the ends of the earth, and the congregation of monks was greater than usual, so that there were not enough altars to celebrate on, and the choir was too mean and insignificant and not large enough for so great a multitude. It seemed good to the man of God to provide against all this inconvenience, and he began to contemplate a scheme, great in accordance with the greatness of his mind, to build namely a new church of Fountains, a task strange and marvellous, happily begun and more happily concluded. Many wondered at the daring and courage of the man who dared at such a time to undertake such a work, so unusual and so magnificent. But he, trusting in the help of God and placing his hope in the Lord, laid the foundation of the building, set up some columns, and would have fulfilled his vow, had not the dispensation of fate intervened. In the eighth year after he was made abbot of Fountains he was seized by a grievous sickness, and felt that the time of his summons was at hand. He made all arrangements for his monastery, and then, all due ceremonies having been performed around him, departed happily, firm in good faith, to the Lord. There was no lack of a man to continue zealously the work he began. For after him rose up strenuous men, his successors, who raised up seed to their dead brother. And the building that had been happily begun they finished yet more happily. But an unusual thing happened in this connexion, namely, that three Johns were successively at the head of the church of Fountains, of whom one

began the building, the second carried on the work with vigour, and the third finished it gloriously. The first was John born at York, the second was John bishop of Ely, the third the John who yet lives and rules over us, a native of Kent.¹

¹ As Serlo says on p. 128, that 'this is the sixty-ninth year since the time of my conversion, and I was then, as I remember, near about the beginning of my thirtieth year, when I first betook myself to Fountains to join the holy brotherhood,' and on p. 186 mentions the fact of his joining Fountains just before he describes the foundation of Newminster in 1138, it seems as if this narrative dates from 1207, the fourth year of John of York. The last section must then be a continuation of the original story.

APPENDIX II

A CHRONICLE OF THE ABBOTS OF FOUNTAINS

(‘This Chronicle is taken from the President-Book of Fountains, now among the Muniments of the Abbey at Studley Royal. It has been written about the middle of the fifteenth century, and was, probably, compiled by the learned Abbot Greenwell, who is the last person recorded in it; the style *Magister* before his name, and the concluding words, *Fontanensi ecclesiae 29 annis praefuit laudabiliter*, having been added by another hand. The chief sources of information appear to have been the Chronicle of Hugh de Kirkstall; a Chronicle of Robert Thornton—probably the abbot of that name; a Psalter, which may also have been used as an Obituary; and the monumental inscriptions in the Church and the Chapter-house—the wording of which, in the instances of Abbots Ripon and Paslew, seems to have been partially quoted. Had it not been for this compilation, it would have been impossible to have obtained a perfect series of the abbots, or to have ascertained their several places of burial.’—WALBRAN.)

A. D. 1132, October 6, the monks left the monastery of York with Richard, prior of that monastery, afterwards the first abbot of Fountains. They all remained under the protection and in the house of Thurstan, archbishop of York, for eleven weeks and five days, before the monastery of Fountains was founded by the said Thurstan. The said

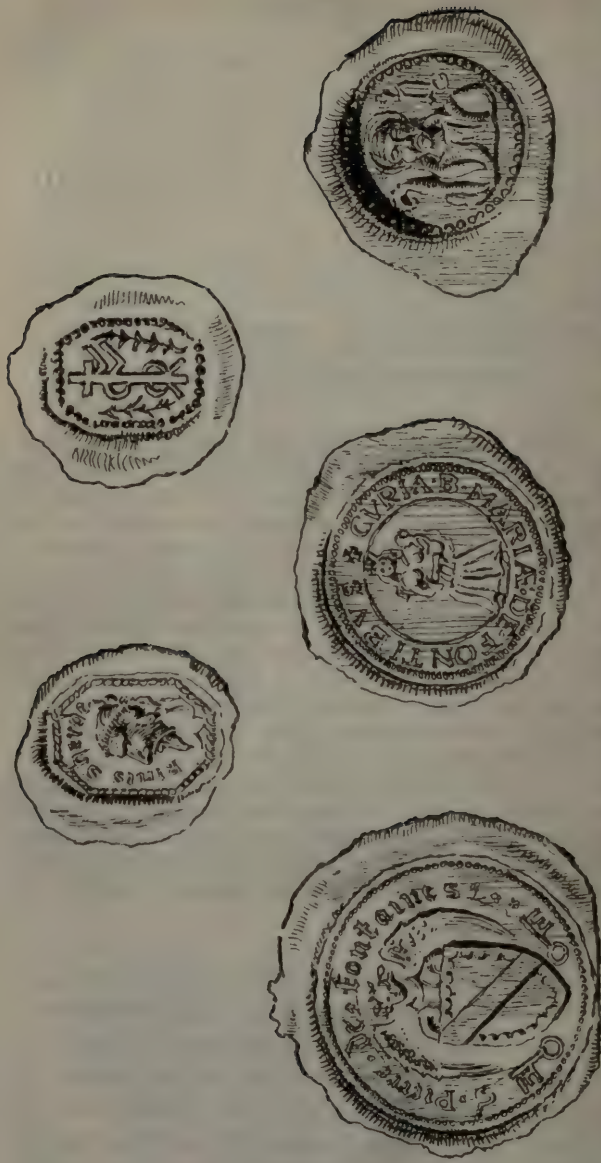


FIG. 99. SEALS AND RINGS PRESERVED AT STUDLEY ROYAL. THE THIRD, FOURTH, AND FIFTH MUST HAVE BEEN FOUND EARLY, AS THEY ARE REPRESENTED BY BURTON, 1758. THE SIGN PERHAPS WAS HUBY'S RING.

monks were in number thirteen, twelve priests and a levite. It was leap year. It was (the twelfth year of¹) the metonic cycle of nineteen years. The year of the solar cycle was twenty-one. The concurrent² was five, the indiction ten, the epact one.

A.D. 1132, namely, the thirty-third year of King Henry I and the eighteenth of Archbishop Thurstan, December 27, that is, the feast of St. John the Evangelist, the same Thurstan founded the monastery of Fountains, eleven weeks and five days after the secession from the monastery of York, and made Prior Richard the abbot. In the time of King Henry I he ruled two years twelve months and two days, and in the time of King Stephen, three years five months and eleven days.

A.D. 1139, April 30, died Richard, the first abbot of Fountains, who ruled six years four months and twelve days. He lies at Rome, whither he was taken by Alberic, bishop of Ostia.

A.D. 1143, October 12, died Richard the second abbot of Fountains. He was buried at Clairvaux, after he had ruled for four years five months and twenty-five days, counting from the death of Richard the first abbot. He was once sacristan in the monastery of York. To this Richard

¹ The words in brackets are not in the original, but the golden number of that year was twelve.

² The reader who needs an explanation of this word must refer to Du Cange, i. 292; ii. 516. The other terms are explained in most dictionaries.

Innocent II wrote Bull of Privileges I in 1141. He lived in the time of King Stephen four years five months and twenty-five days.

About A. D. 1146, Henry Murdac, who succeeded Richard the second, after having been abbot for three years, was elected bishop of York and set out for the papal court, where at Treves he was invested by Pope Eugene III. The same pope wrote to him Bull of Privileges II, in the year 1145. He was formerly abbot of Vauclair. He was sent to Fountains by the blessed Bernard to hold a visitation. After his investiture he returned to Fountains and made a certain Maurice, a monk of Rievaulx, abbot. This Maurice spent not quite three months at Fountains, and then resigning his charge into the hands of the archbishop, returned to the place from which he had been taken. And both the aforesaid Henry and Maurice were abbots in the time of King Stephen.

After this Maurice came Abbot Thorold, who was likewise taken from the monastery of Rievaulx. For two years he presided over the monastery of Fountains, and then a quarrel arose between him and the venerable Archbishop Henry, and at the command of the holy father Bernard he resigned his office and returned to Rievaulx. In the time of this Abbot Thorold the abbey of Jervaulx was founded on March 8, 1159, as appears in the chronicles¹ of Jervaulx.²

¹ Literally 'foundation', that is, a chronicle beginning with the foundation. The Dean of Westminster tells me that one of his abbey chronicles is so called.

² Jervaulx was really founded in 1145 and removed to its present site in 1156.

On the resignation of Abbot Thorold he was succeeded by Richard, fourth abbot of Fountains, once precentor of Clairvaux and abbot of Vauclair, an Englishman, born in York. This Richard was made abbot by the ordination of St. Bernard, and coming to Fountains ruled the monastery for a certain time, relying upon the aid of Archbishop Henry, who died at Sherburn¹ on October 14, 1153, and was buried in the church of St. Peter at York, after having been bishop for seven years. In his time the rulers of Fountains were the aforesaid abbots, Maurice, Thorold, and Richard. It should be noticed that the time which elapsed between the death of Richard the second abbot was ten years and two days, which years were part of the reign of King Stephen.

A. D. 1170, May 31, died Richard, precentor of Clairvaux, fourth abbot of Fountains, having been abbot sixteen years eight months and five days after the death of Archbishop Henry. In 1156 Adrian IV wrote to him Bull of Privileges III and in 1162 Alexander III wrote to him Bull of Privileges IV. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains, and was abbot in the time of King Stephen, after the death of the said Henry, for one year and ten days, and in the time of Henry II fifteen years seven months and twenty-three days.

A. D. 1178, January 9, died Robert de Pipewell, fifth abbot of Fountains, after he had ruled the said monastery for nine years seven months and twenty-seven days. This Robert was formerly abbot of Pipewell, and was translated from the

¹. Sherburn-in-Elmet, near Church Fenton.

bosom of the daughter to govern the mother. In 1172 Alexander III wrote to him Bull of Privileges V and he ruled in the time of Henry II. He died at Woburn, and having been brought to Fountains was buried in the chapter-house.

A.D. 1190, October 8, died William, sixth abbot of Fountains, having completed a stewardship of ten years ten months and twenty-two days from the death of Robert, the fifth abbot. This William was first a canon at Guisborough, then abbot of Newminster, and finally was taken from the lap of the daughter to be the father. He received the habit from St. Robert, abbot of Newminster, and ruled in the time of Henry II for nine years six months and nine days, and in the time of Richard I one year four months and thirteen days. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A.D. 1203, June 4, died Ralph Haget, seventh abbot of Fountains, who ruled the church of Fountains for twelve years seven months and fourteen days, calculating the date from the death of William, sixth abbot, to the death of this Ralph. This Ralph was first a soldier in the world, then he assumed the religious habit by the advice of Sinnulph, a lay-brother, from the hand of Abbot Robert, and was made abbot of Kirkstall. Here he spent nine years, and then was taken back to govern the mother-house. He ruled in the time of Richard I eight years five months and nine days, and in the time of King John, four years two months and five days. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A. D. 1209, June 14, died John of York, eighth abbot of Fountains, after being abbot for six years and nine days, as can be proved by the dates of the deaths of Abbot Ralph and himself. In the chronicles ¹ of Fountains, however, it is stated that this John died in the eighth year after his appointment as abbot ; but this appears from the dates of the said abbots to be impossible, unless the said Abbot Ralph had resigned for two years before his death. But in the chronicle of Robert Thornton it is stated that this John died in 1211, according to which it is true that this John was abbot for eight years and nine days after the death of Ralph. This John was received as a novice at Fountains, afterwards made cellarer, then appointed abbot of Louth Park, and finally undertook the church of Fountains, his mother-church, and ruled in the time of King John eight years and nine days. He began the new building of the church at Fountains. He was buried in the chapter-house in front of the president's seat.

About A. D. 1219, John, ninth abbot of Fountains, was elected bishop of Ely, after having held the office of abbot, as is estimated, for seven years eleven months and eighteen days. His successor was John of Kent, cellarer of the same monastery. This John of Ely governed the church of Ely for six years, and died on May 6, 1225, and so there elapsed thirteen years eleven months and eighteen days between the death of John of York and the death of John of Ely. He ruled in the time of King John for five years four months and twenty-four days, and in the time of Henry III for two

¹ Pages 229, 234 (1).

years six months and twenty-two days. He was buried at Ely. He carried on the new work on the church of Fountains.

A.D. 1247, November 25, died John of Kent, tenth abbot of Fountains, who ruled the monastery of Fountains for twenty-eight years seven months and seven days, that is, twenty-two years seven months and seven days from the death of John of Ely. He built and finished the nine altars, the cloister, the infirmary, the pavement¹ and guest-house, to receive Christ's poor as well as the great ones of the world. He was buried in the chapter-house at Fountains in front of the president's seat. He ruled in the time of King Henry III.

A.D. 1252, September 6, died Stephen de Eston, eleventh abbot of Fountains, having completed a term of office as abbot of five years ten months and five days. But in the chronicles² of Fountains it is stated that he governed the church of Fountains for six years. The year of Christ, however, is not mentioned in the date of his death. This Stephen was first made cellarer of Fountains, next appointed abbot of Sawley for ten years. He was translated from Sawley to Newminster and finally received back to his first mother as father. He was abbot in the time of Henry III. He was buried before the president's seat in the chapter-house of the monastery of Vaudey, where he blazes with miracles.

¹ Leland, quoting apparently from a continuation of Hugo's chronicle, calls it a decorated, i. e. geometrical pavement (*pictum pavimentum*). *Collectanea*, iv. 108. See Walbran, p. 129.

² Page 234, note 1.

A. D. 1258, December 1, died William of Allerton, twelfth abbot of Fountains, who ruled for five years three months and two days. He was appointed on the day of St. Maurice, abbot,¹ in the year 1258. He ruled in the time of Henry III. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains before the president's seat.

A. D. 1259, April 30, died Adam, thirteenth abbot of Fountains, and so the said William and this Adam presided for five years eight months and twelve days. But in the combination of the years of the abbots and kings it is said that they ruled in the time of King Henry III six years six months and twenty-seven days.² How can this be true? He lies in the chapter-house of Fountains, near the seat of the prior.

A. D. 1265, October 11, died Alexander, fourteenth abbot of Fountains, who presided for five years seven months and nine days. He ruled in the time of Henry III. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A. D. 1274, October 25, died Reginald, fifteenth abbot of Fountains, who presided for nine years and seven months, and the office of abbot was vacant for five months and nine days. He ruled in the time of Henry III seven years one month and seven days, and in the time of Edward I, one year twelve months and one day. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A. D. 1279, July 8, Peter, abbot of Fountains, resigned or was deposed, having presided for four

¹ Jan. 15 is the commemoration of St. Maurice, abbot.

² Walbran, p. 154.

years three months and twenty-three days. He was called Alyng and died August 11, 1282. The same Peter appears in the psalter,¹ and so he resigned for three years. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains; he ruled in the time of Edward I.

A. D. 1279, July 8, Nicholas was appointed sixteenth abbot and died on December 26 of the same year. So he governed the said monastery for six months and nine days. The office of abbot was vacant for six months and thirteen days. He reigned in the time of Edward I. He is buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A. D. 1280, on the octave of the Nativity of John the Baptist,² Adam was appointed seventeenth abbot. On May 16, 1284, died Adam seventh (*sic*) abbot of Fountains, after he had ruled three years eleven months and eleven days; and the office of abbot was vacant for twenty-six days. The same Adam Ravensworth, the aforesaid abbot, ruled in the days of Edward I. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A. D. 1290, December 23, died Henry Otley. He is not included in the catalogue of the abbots. He presided for six years six months and twenty-seven days from the death of Adam. He was appointed in 1284 on the feast of Barnabas the apostle.³ He reigned in the time of Edward I. He

¹ See introductory note to Appendix II. It seems strange that Peter was not included in the enumeration of the abbots, and yet was buried in the chapter-house.

² July 1.

³ June 11.

was buried at the threshold of the chapter-house of Fountains.¹

A. D. 1306, died Robert Thornton, once abbot of Fountains, as appears in the psalter. In 1289, on the feast of St. Thomas the apostle,² Robert was abbot as appears from an indenture. He ruled the monastery in the time of Edward I. He was buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.³

A. D. 1310, March 16, died Robert Bishopton, eighteenth abbot of Fountains, who presided for twenty years two months and twenty-eight days after the death of Henry, that is, sixteen years seven months six days, in the time of Edward I, and three years eight months and twenty-two days in the days of Edward II. He is buried in the chapter-house of Fountains, and the monastery was vacant for twenty-one days.

A. D. 1311, April 6, William Rigton was appointed, and on May 31, 1316, died William Rigton, nineteenth abbot of Fountains, who presided five years one month and twenty-seven days in the time of Edward II. He rests in the chapter-house of Fountains before the reading-desk.

A. D. 1336, resigned Walter Coxwold. He presided for nineteen years twelve months and

¹ It is not known why he was omitted from the list of abbots and buried in a humbler place than those of his predecessors.

² Dec. 21.

³ Robert Thornton is not numbered among the abbots. He must have resigned soon after his appointment, as his successor's term of office dates from Henry Otley's death.

twenty-five days, and died on May 8, 1338. He ruled in the time of Edward II ten years eight months and twenty-two days, and in the days of Edward III nine years four months and three days. He is buried in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A. D. 1345, March 14, died Robert Copgrove, twenty-first abbot of Fountains, who presided for nine years ten months and eleven days. He was appointed on May 27, 1336, on the vigil of Trinity Sunday. He presided in the time of Edward III. He rests in the chapter-house of Fountains.

A. D. 1369, October 28, died Robert Monckton, twenty-second abbot of Fountains, who presided for twenty-three years eight months and four days in the days of Edward III. He was appointed on April 19, 1346. He is buried in the church before the altar of Saint Peter.

A. D. 1383, on the morrow of the Purification,¹ William Gower, twenty-third abbot of Fountains, resigned. He presided for fourteen years three months and fourteen days, that is, seven years eight months and nineteen days in the time of Edward III, and six years seven months and twenty-four days in the days of Richard II. He was appointed on the morrow of St. Martin² in the year . . . (*sic*) and was a bachelor of divinity. He was blind in his old age and died in 1390. So he resigned seven years one month and nine days before his death. He was buried before the Nine Altars about the centre.

¹ Feb. 3.

² Nov. 12.

A. D. 1383, Robert Burley was appointed abbot on the morrow of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin.¹ He presided for fifteen years nine months and seven days in the time of Richard II, and in the time of Henry IV . . . (*sic*). He died on St. Gervase's day, May 13, in the twenty-seventh year of his office as abbot, the third day of Whitsun week, 1410. He is buried in the centre of the choir before the stalls of the abbot and prior.

A. D. . . . (*sic*), Roger Frank ruled with the title by which he seized the office in the time of Henry IV, but not peacefully, for² his title was annulled at Rome, and the title of John Ripon, the true abbot, was established, and the said Roger was expelled, after many and heavy expenses had been incurred on both sides.

A. D. . . . (*sic*), the aforesaid John Ripon, elected immediately after Robert Burley, formerly abbot of Meaux, and before that cellarer of Fountains. When the aforesaid Roger Frank had been expelled, he ruled after the expulsion of Roger, in the time of Henry IV . . . (*sic*) and in the time of Henry V . . . (*sic*), and in the time of Henry VI . . . (*sic*), and died on March 12, 1434, at Thorpe Underwoods. He was buried at Fountains, before the entrance to the choir, in the nave of the church. He was a man most worthy of praise and pious remembrance, helpful in spiritual and temporal matters. May God be gracious to his soul. Amen.³

¹ Feb. 3.

² A word is missing here.

³ Mr. Walbran gives several documents relating to the disputed election, but the cause of the dispute is not clear. Roger Frank's election had the support of Clairvaux, John

A. D. 1434, March, Thomas Paslew was appointed. He presided in the time of Henry VI for . . . (*sic*), from the death of John Ripon. He resigned, stricken by grievous paralysis, on September 9, 1442, and died on October 23, 1443. He was comely and handsome in person, in soul devout, in countenance serene, affectionate to the brethren, kind to all. May God be gracious to his soul. He was placed in his earthly sepulchre in the nave of the church, before the entrance to the choir, near the centre, between the altar of St. Mary and the altar of St. Bernard.

A. D. 1442, September 9, John Martin was appointed. He was a man of remarkable experience in worldly matters. He presided in the time of Henry VI for seven weeks and six days, and died at Balderby, October 26, 1442. He is buried in the nave of the church between John Ripon and Thomas Paslew, former abbots.

A. D. 1442, Master John Greenwell, professor of divinity, originally a monk and a scholar¹ at Fountains. He was elected abbot of Vaudey, but refused to accept the position, preferring to spend his time in the university of Oxford. Afterwards he was elected abbot of Waverley, but refused for forty days, not wishing to be separated from the brethren of Fountains. But finally he was overcome by the persistency of the king and the chief

Ripon's that of the Pope. Both parties appealed to parliament.

¹ This may mean that he was educated from a child at Fountains, or perhaps that after his profession he went to Oxford to study.

men of the kingdom, and won over by the prayers of the brethren of Waverley and the fathers of the order. The licence of the men of Fountains was given, and on the fortieth day after his election he undertook the charge of Waverley. He ruled there for two years, and at length after the death of Abbot John Martin, presided with honour for twenty-nine years over the church of Fountains.

There were five more abbots of Fountains :

A. D. 1471, Thomas Swinton, twenty-ninth abbot, of whom there is an interesting account in Walbran's *Memorials*, p. 149. He resigned in 1478.

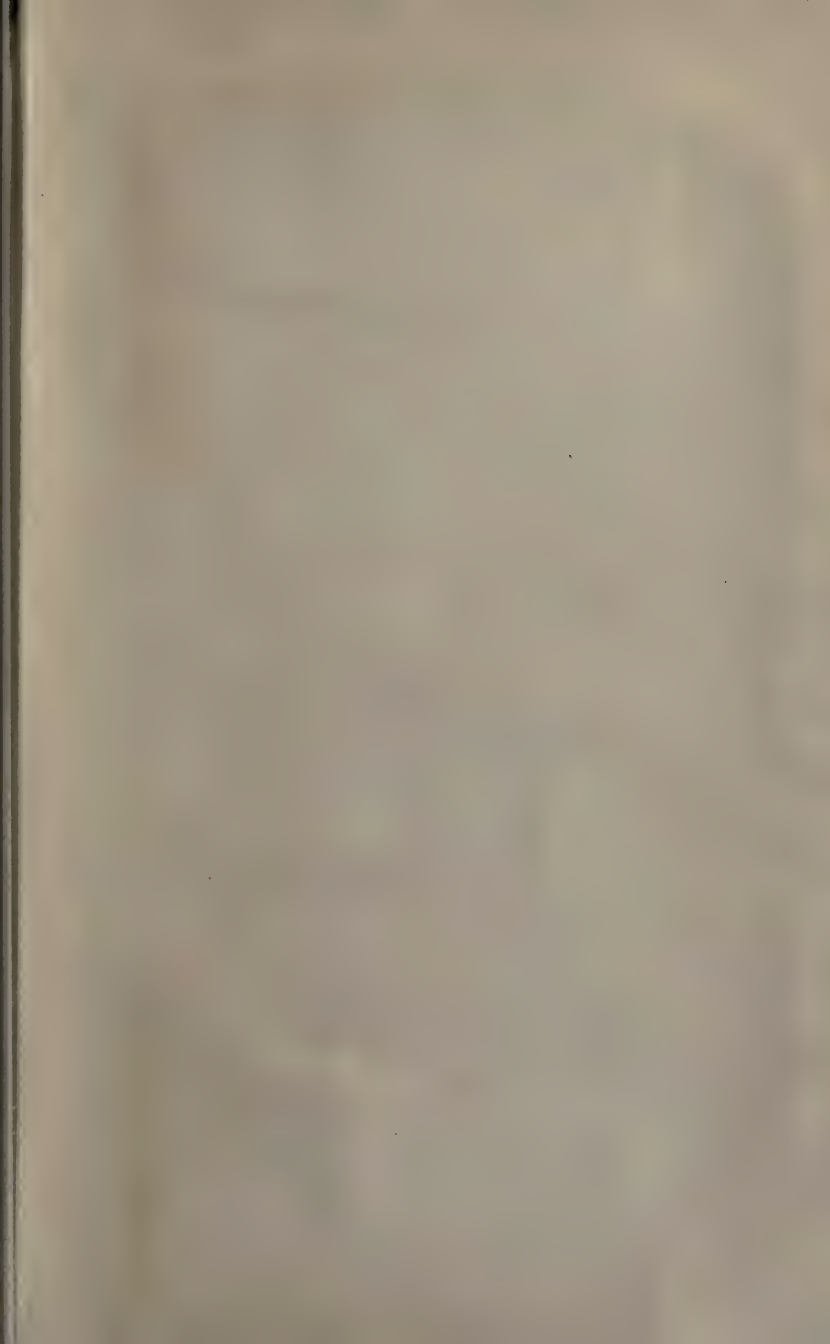
A. D. 1478, John Darnton, thirtieth abbot, who was formerly cellarer.

A. D. 1494, Marmaduke Huby, thirty-first abbot. He must have become a monk very early, for he says in a letter to Lord Dacre that he had been professed in the monastery of Fountains for the space of sixty years.¹

A. D. 1526, William Thirsk, B.D., thirty-second abbot, who was hanged for his share in the Pilgrimage of Grace.

A. D. 1536, Marmaduke Bradley, who surrendered the monastery to Henry VIII, November 26, 1539.

Memorials of Fountains, p. 241.



HECCLE.
O.

190219

Author Oxford, A. W.

Title The ruins of Fountains Abbey.

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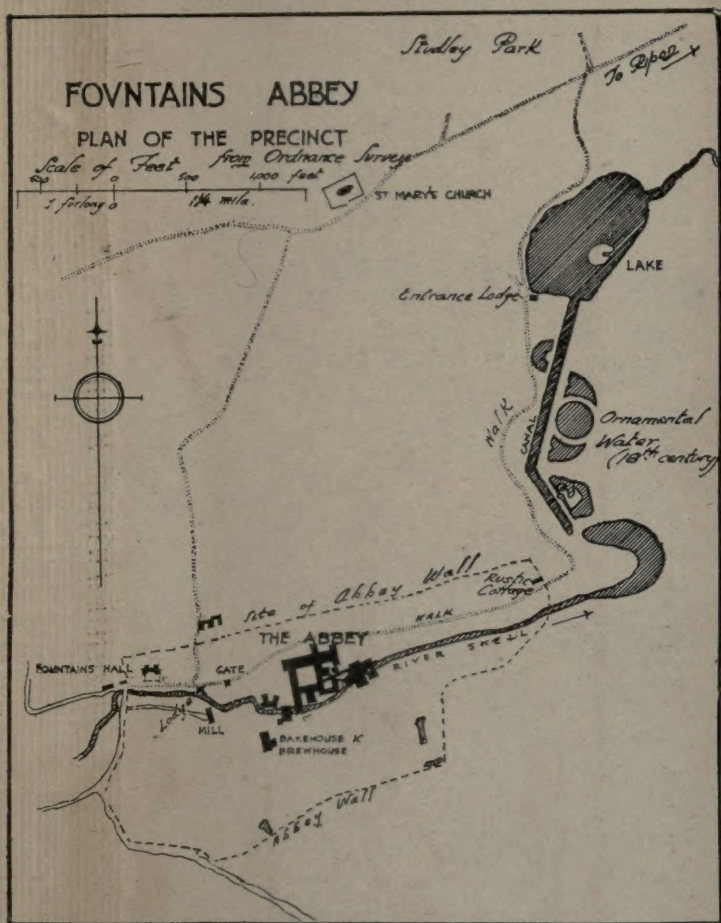


FIG. 101.

